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Gnome

ONCE again, this newspaper is under attack from its rivals who are attempting to blacken my good name by running disgraceful allegations about my friend Colonel Gadaffi.

They claim that I have promised Colonel Gadaffi positive press coverage in the *Absurder* if he will buy up all the loss-making parts of the Gnomrho Empire.

There is not a jot of truth in this vile calumny. The Libyan Government has agreed to invest in the Gnomitel luxury Hotel chain (including the Five-Star Tripoli Trelford) and has entered into a joint venture involving a £2,000 million cash injection into the Asholi Gold mines. But that is all.

They have asked for nothing in return. Nor would they. Colonel Gadaffi is not like that. Indeed, contrary to much received opinion in the West, he is an extremely moral, liberal, decent, tolerant, free-thinking, moderate, friendly, generous, saintly, loyal, shy, humble, delightful, handsome, witty and thoroughly nice man.

Donald Strobeford
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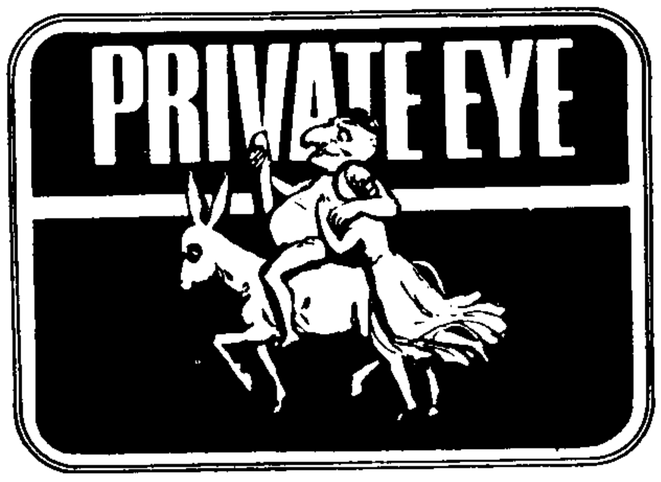


COLOUR SECTION

LIBEL NEWS

MS JANI Allan may have cost Peter Carter-Fuck & Partners, the highly respected firm of libel solicitors, a good deal more than just a savaged reputation.

Ms Allan was a personal client of Peter Carter-Fuck himself, and was not asked for fees up front. Nor did she pay any as the case progressed. She was, however, obliged to pay her brief fees of around £20,000; and this she did by way of a mortgage taken out on a property by her mother.

Channel 4 will want its costs, said to be around £200,000, while Carter-Fuck is out of pocket to the tune of £80,000 for his and faces the prospect of having to pick up Channel 4's costs as well. Channel 4 will argue that as Carter-Fuck did not secure fees in advance he was maintaining Ms Allan in her action, and it will look to his firm for reimbursement. Carter-Fuck is currently away on holiday.

PS: Jani Allan's journalistic career in England has been somewhat lacklustre. Having been sacked by the South African *Sunday Times*, she persisted in using the paper's London bureau to make phone calls until she was banned from the premises; and when she was granted a shift on the *Daily Express* she spent much of the day telephoning friends. However, one of her earliest attempts at a piece of writing was a freelance contribution to *The Sunday Times Magazine*. The piece, which was never published, was a glowing encomium to one Peter Carter-Fuck, whose blow-torch eyes etc., etc.

ANYONE who enjoyed the Jani Allan case has another treat in store in September, when the high court will hear a libel suit brought against the *People* by Mona Bauwens.

Ms Bauwens is the daughter of Jaweed al Ghusein of the Palestine Liberation Organisation. She is also a friend and holiday companion of David Mellor MP — and her relations with the fun-loving "heritage minister" will be at the centre of the libel suit.

The *People* is calling an interesting array of witnesses. One is Yigal Karmon, who is the chief liaison man between the Israeli prime minister and Mossad. (What his relevance is remains to be seen.) Another is Mellor himself, who will be cross-examined about his relations with Ms Bauwens by the *People*'s counsel — none other than George Carman QC.

Presumably this ordeal will hold no terrors for the fun-loving minister; after all, as he told Antonia de Sancha, he is a barrister himself and therefore trained in the assessment of evidence.

THE *Daily Mirror* has lost the first round in litigation surrounding Maxwell's last legal battle.

Cap'n Bob and the *Mirror* sued Faber & Faber and its author Seymour Hersh over allegations that Maxwell had "a close relationship" with Mossad and that he and *Mirror* foreign editor Nicholas Davies had betrayed the whereabouts of Mordechai Vanunu, the Israeli nuclear whistle-blower.

The allegations provoked shouts of rage from the *Mirror* and Joe Haines exploded all over the front page. But the high court has now dismissed the actions. The personal action by Maxwell fell because of his death; the other action, by Mirror Group Newspapers, was thrown out after Faber & Faber said it did not accept that it was defamatory of the group. The *Mirror* is appealing.

MORE NEWS of famous lawyers who worked for the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP) during the Great Frame-Ups of the 1970s.

Mr Christopher Bourke, who now sits as a stipendiary magistrate at London's Clerkenwell court, worked for nearly 20 years (1955-1974) for the director's department, and he it was who in the Judith Ward case wrote to the defence assuring them that all the relevant documents had been disclosed.

As the recent appeal court judgment makes clear, this simply was not the case. But Mr Bourke was never called to open court to explain his curious letter. The court, it seems, was satisfied with an affidavit from him which explained that he was in such a junior post at the DPP that he was not in a position to know whether the facts he had set out in his letter were correct or not.

AFTER months of sycophantic silence, Fleet Street has finally gone hunting the Boo Boo — aka Boutros Boutros Ghali, the United Nations secretary-general.

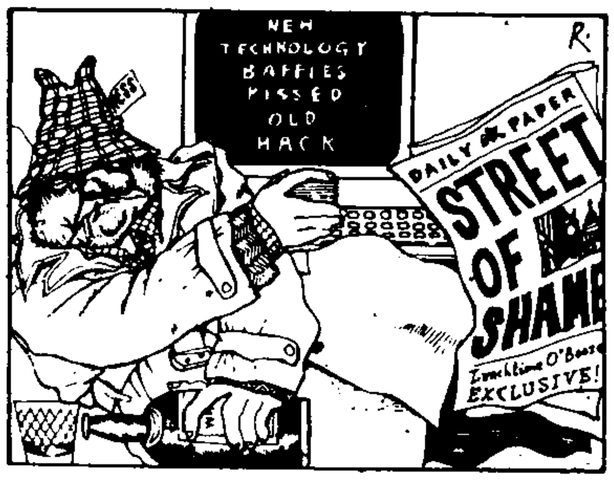
Lord Gnome, who was calling for the Egyptian's sacking three months *before* he was even appointed, now thinks the secretary-general may have a point.

While doing little or nothing about the plight of the Bosnians, the West has been doing even less about the much bigger fatality rate in Somalia, which could be settled with less effort and cost.

It is true that the British have treated Boo Boo with some degree of condescension. They have shown no gratitude for the sacrifice made by his grandfather, killed by Egyptians for being pro-British in colonial days. Indeed, they have not shown the respect due for his advanced years, even though they have claimed that his age is in fact four more years than shown on his CV.

The real question is whether Boo Boo's current independence is the product of ideology or Alzheimer's disease. During a recent interview with *New York Times* hack Patrick Tyler, he lost control for 20 minutes.

"Been on the market long?"



CONRAD Black has issued proceedings against the *Indie* claiming that it was responsible for the flop of the *Telegraph* share issue last month.

In a frothy statement of claim issued by solicitors Farrars, Black says an article on 28 June had caused him to suffer "intense irritation and distress and his reputation, both personal and professional, has been severely damaged". He also claims aggravated damages.

In fact the Montreal Moosehead should know better. His share issue flopped because it was priced too high. And his lawyers should trawl the media analysts before they take this writ too far. No doubt the *Indie* will be doing the same.

If he has suffered "intense irritation and distress" it is not hard to understand why. Both he and his advisers got the float price wrong and they are now left with copious amounts of egg on their faces.

THE *Torygraph*'s annual works outing last month was to Stowe, the Buckinghamshire public school, where various leisure activities were provided.

Although a couple of coaches were laid on to take the 60-odd staff members who did not have their own transport, only 17 turned up, much to the fury of the management who have since sent out angry memos to the absconders.

The highlight of the day, without doubt, was the spectacle of proprietor Conrad Black, chauffeurless in a dodgem car, while various hacks apologised to him each time their vehicles collided with his.

Such fawning is the opposite of the approach being taken by *Vanity Fair*, which is currently researching a profile of the Canadian-born Black and his new bride Barbara Amiel. This coincides with the arrival at *Vanity Fair* of Graydon Carter, himself Canadian-born, under whose editorship the magazine is expected to carry less fellatial profiles.

SUNDAY *TORYGRAPH* editor Trevor Grove has been in a state of paranoia ever since the *Eye* obtained a copy of his letter to his gardener, which he had mistakenly sent to a general basket on the paper's computer system.

Things must have seemed pretty bad when he was introduced to someone at a recent party as Ross Benson. But this was as nothing compared to the wretched moment when an underling rushed into his office the other day and exclaimed: "Terrible news, Trevor, terrible news!"

"What is it?" inquired Grove meekly. "Have I been sacked?"

"No," replied the hack, "we've lost the crossword clues."

JUST FANCY THAT

WAQAR YOUNIS is the best fast bowler in the world — and on his way to becoming one of the all-time greats.

He has a remarkable and unique ability to bowl high-velocity, inswinging yorkers virtually at will.

The Sun p.28. 5.8.92

WASIM AKRAM has all the classic qualities of the great left-arm fast bowler — and more besides.

He has a remarkable and unique ability to bowl high-velocity, inswinging yorkers virtually at will.

The Sun p.29. 5.8.92

FOLLOWING the "settlement" of the Alison Halford affair, certain members of the Murkeyside police authority (MPA) will still not let the matter rest.

Controversy has been renewed over the leaking to the press of a confidential 110-page report into disciplinary charges against Halford made by the deputy chief constable for South Wales, David Mellor (no relation).

His report is highly critical of Halford, although many of its statements are contradictory. For some reason Mellor did not interview Halford herself over the alleged incident.

Under standing order 51, confidential reports received by the MPA cannot be made public without the full approval of the police committee. Whether or not the *Daily Mirror* actually paid money for the report is a mystery only it can resolve, but it is widely rumoured that a former member of the MPA sold his set of documents to the *News of the Screws*.

The clerk to the police authority, David Henshaw, has promised a full investigation into the leaks. He proposes to ask every member of the committee whether or not they were responsible — so it is very unlikely any guilty party will be found.

It was interesting to note, however, that the *Mirror* printed a commendation the following day from MPA deputy chairman Harry Rimmer, who was far from disgusted with the paper's publication of the purloined goods. Rimmer appears to be furious that his long-stalked prey has not been thoroughly humiliated and disgraced.

THE PRESENT campaign by the *Sun* to embarrass the *Mirror* over its price rise from 25p to 27p (suggesting that it is a tax on readers to pay for the crimes of Cap'n Bob) is a fantastic piece of hypocrisy, as those at the top of both papers know. But it is also strong evidence of the incompetent leadership at Mirror Group Newspapers.

Shortly before Ernie Burrington was dumped as group chairman, senior managers at the *Sun* approached the *Daily Mirror* and suggested that both papers should increase their cover prices to 27p, yet for some reason the Mirror Group board was against the idea.

However, after Burrington was ousted the *Mirror* changed its mind and opted for a unilateral price rise to 27p at what circulation managers consider to be the worst time of the year. The *Sun*, which had been bleating to its rival about the need for a rise for several months, will increase its price to 27p in either September or January, which are felt to be the appropriate months for such a change.

A NEWS story in the 2 August issue of the *News of the Screws* about the last-minute cancellation of Michael Jackson's concert in London the previous night, noted gleefully that "our pathetic rival the *People*" had "reported last night's Jacko show... before it didn't happen!"

Early editions of that day's *People* did indeed report that "Jackson finished the last of his three sell-out concerts at Wembley last night." But it was not the only culprit. Another paper that Sunday raved on about the non-existent concert, claiming that it had "wowed 70,000 fans at Wembley stadium last night."

And where did this appear? In a "Wacko Jacko Pop Gossip Special" on page 33 of... the *News of the Screws*.

A grovelling apology to John Cunningham, member for nuclear waste, has been published in the *Grauniad* because the paper said British Nuclear Fools had promoted his candidacy during the general election.

BNFL, which employs 12,000 people in Cunningham's Copeland constituency, published a leaflet containing an interview with him which appeared the day after the election was announced. The interview had taken place *before* the announcement, so as anybody could see it could not have been held to have promoted his election campaign. After all, BNFL could not have had any idea that an election was in the offing, could it?

Cunningham is the man least likely to be elected to the Labour Party's executive by the constituency parties — he is not exactly a popular figure. But he likes everyone to know what a friendly, matey sort of chap he is and tells people to call him Jack. The apology dutifully appeared under the headline "Dr Jack Cunningham".

ASTONISHING news from Wapping, where another higher primate on the *Sun* newsdesk has learnt to read.

Proof came last month when the paper ran YOU'RE BUCK$ IN! — WHY IT MAKES CENTS TO TAKE A SHOPPING TRIP TO THE US, a detailed breakdown of prices in London and New York.

Bylined "Nick Parker", the piece was indeed "nicked" — lifted wholesale from the previous day's *Daily Telegraph*, right down to the comparative price of a cheeseburger and fries.

Why the average *Sun* reader also needed to know the cost of a "swimpool creepy crawly cleaner" — £445 in Britain; a snip at £309 in the US — is a mystery. Presumably Kelvin's nickers were trying to pander to their up-market readers at home in their El Dorado-style Essex mansions.

THE ever-resourceful *Sun* came up with a really great idea during the Olympic Games.

"David Coleman, the BBC's top presenter at the Olympics, is as famous for his cock-ups as his commentaries," it told its readers on 29 July. "We want you to listen out if Coleman or any of his pals make a gaffe during the games. If you hear one, write it on a postcard with your name and address and send it to COLEMANBALLS, *The Sun*, 1 Virginia St..."

What will they think of next?

Blackadder

BLACKADDER GETS MARRIED...
FOR OUR HONEYMOON LET'S REALLY GET AWAY FROM IT ALL!
LATER...
OH! DARLING! HOW CLEVER! IT'S COMPLETELY DESERTED!

WHO is the minister who leads the government campaign against the BBC's right to advertise its own products? He is Mr Neil Hamilton, the "corporate affairs minister".

Could this be the same Neil Hamilton who, nearly 10 years ago, sued the BBC over the *Panorama* programme "Maggie's Militant Tendency", which suggested that certain Tories were not best known for their amazing moderation?

Is this the same Neil Hamilton who, with his colleague, Thatcher aide Gerald Howarth, came away from the case with enormous tax-free damages after the BBC collapsed (before even putting its case to the court) and whose outraged cries of horror against the BBC were plastered all over the newspapers?

If it is the same Mr Hamilton, perhaps the corporate affairs minister should find someone else to make pronouncements so damaging to a corporation against which he has been so personally committed in the past.

THE unfair nature of some political donations to the Conservative Party has been highlighted by the recent revelation that Thames Water, the private monopoly, gave £50,000 to the Tories.

The donation was queried by a disgruntled customer, Eryl Freestone of London SE9, who wrote to the company to complain. She has now had a reply.

"I am sorry that you do not agree with the political donation to the Conservative Party," writes Mr C.W. Moore in customer services. "The board of Thames Water plc was satisfied that the company and its shareholders would benefit from the return of a Conservative government... This is therefore not a matter for debate with the customers of businesses within the Thames Water Group of companies as the distribution of shareholders' profits is a matter of policy for shareholders and board members to decide."

The normal reaction of companies to customers who grumble about political donations is to point out that they can always take their custom elsewhere. But as Ms Freestone noted in her letter, that is hardly the case with Thames Water, which is a monopoly.

Mr Moore has a ready answer: "I can only comment that to withdraw your custom from Thames Water Utilities Ltd you could either disconnect your water and sewerage pipework or move house to a property outside our service region."

"I trust," he concludes, "that this clarifies the position." Indeed.

SIR John Wheeler may have been removed from the chairmanship of the home affairs select committee under the same rule discovered by Sir Marcus Fox that unseated Nicholas Winterton from health (the rule states that no one with an inquiring mind may chair a committee for too long) but he has quietly gained another chair.

Two weeks before the parliamentary recess, the largest parliamentary grouping within Westminster, the Conservative Friends of Israel, voted Sir John to succeed the worthy Sir Robert Rhodes James as chairman in preference to Sir Rhodes Boyson.

His victory came as a great surprise to many grass roots members of the organisation. However, word from within Whitehall has suggested that the foreign office tacitly approves any chairman of this organisation and Sir John was its preference.

Strange to think that it may have such influence in this direction when the man at the FO in charge of Middle Eastern affairs is the Arabist David Gore-Booth. Unlike other civil servants who remain professionally aloof and neutral in their jobs, Gore-Booth has let his sympathies be known by appearing on platforms with PLO spokespersons and has addressed the pro-Arab Middle East Council in more than sympathetic terms.

HUGH Dykes, the oily Euro-fanatic who looks as if he belongs in a boxing ring, was one Tory MP who defied the whips to vote for a huge rise in MPs' expenses.

But Dykes, who is loaded with jobs, hardly needs the extra cash. He is chairman of ADA Video Systems; parliamentary adviser to the British Wine Producers Committee; chairman of the European Movement in Britain; a member of the International Stock Exchange; a majority shareholder in ADA Video Systems; shareholder in Single Market Services GIE; and a shareholder in the city advertising/puff merchant Dewe Rogerson, which employs his wife, Sue, alongside American Catherine Coombs, fomer girlfriend of Lord Bethell and now wife of Simon Coombs MP.

During the past year the busy Dykes informed the clerk to the register of members' interests that he had become an adviser to Rogers & Wells *after* he had written to Lynda Chalker, then overseas aid minister, seeking help for one of R&W's clients.

(While on a visit to New York last September, Dykes visited the offices of the same clients of R&W, lobbying for business on behalf of Dewe Rogerson and knowing full well that the company already employed a highly effective but small PR company back in London!)

Presumably because of the huge majorities with which Dykes has been returned since 1970, his Harrow East constituents are quite happy with time he devotes to their interests. Or as the late Ian Gow remarked: "It's just as well his nose appears to be broken — it saves anyone else the trouble!"

PARLIAMENT'S generous help for the bearded Thatcherite Peter de Savary and his grandiose plans to develop a huge tract of Cornwall may all have been in vain.

Not long ago the ambitious property developer, flanked by his most ardent supporter, the naturalist David Bellamy, seemed to have most of west Cornwall in his sights. He'd bought Land's End and converted the buildings there; bought huge tracts of docklands in Falmouth and, most ambitiously of all, had pushed through Parliament a special bill that allowed him to develop the harbour at Hayle.

He proposed, he said, to turn poor Hayle into a booming holiday centre for wealthy people who would buy the 700 houses he intended to build in the harbour. Hayle Labour Party, which then controlled the town council, supported him. And when a few Labour MPs threatened to oppose the bill in the Commons they were given the full de Savary treatment (one was flown down to Hayle at de Savary's expense) and told to toe the party line.

But nowadays de Savary is less vocal about his schemes. "Everything in Cornwall is for sale," he announces, and indeed has already sold Land's End. But he may not find his other ambitious schemes so easy to flog. At Hayle, for instance, the parliamentary bill he fought for lands him with expensive legal responsibilities. He must now keep the harbour free of the silt for which it is notorious, and he certainly can't do that with revenue from his 700 houses, which are now, as they probably always were, an absurd pipe dream.

Meanwhile the local Labour Party has lost overall control of the town council. In the local elections in May a crucial seat changed hands by a tiny handful of votes. Hayle is in the St Ives constituency where police are still investigating allegations, detailed on *Panorama*, of a vote-rigging scandal. Old voters in nursing homes found, when they turned up to vote, that their votes had already been cast by a Conservative proxy of whom they had never heard.

Such things also went on in the local elections in May. Whether this interesting new interpretation of the proxy vote system kept David Harris in Parliament for St Ives is debatable — he ended up with a (heavily-reduced) majority of just over 1,000 votes. But even if only a few votes were rigged in the local elections in Hayle, they almost certainly toppled Labour. The new hung council, it is said, will be even more obliging to developers than its predecessor.

"The good news is the rate of decline's about to slow down"

AFTER quitting Labour in disgust over the party leadership's shock decision to allow suspected Coventry socialists a fair hearing before expulsion, arch Coventry witch-hunters Joan and Charlie Ward now want to rejoin.

The Wards, former Coventry councillors, led the purges which resulted in superspart Coventry South-East MP Dave Nellist being deselected and expelled from the Labour Party. They also drew up the copious dossier sent to the Walworth Road party HQ that outed more than 120 Coventry Labour members as alleged socialists.

With Coventry now cleansed of left-wingers the Wards feel it safe to resume their position in the people's party. The only trouble is that the Coventry South-East party they wish to re-join has been suspended — thanks to their witch-hunt!

LABOUR, it seems, has learnt nothing from its election defeat.

By failing to advocate withdrawal from the European exchange rate mechanims, the party is cutting the ground from under its own feet yet again.

There is now a consensus among senior treasury civil servants that the Government will have to return to floating exchange rates some time this autumn. If this happens, Labour will presumably oppose the decision. It would look even sillier if it reluctantly accepted it.

SADLY it looks as if the country's last remaining paid socialist, Greater Manchester Central Euro-MP Eddy Newman, could soon be out of a job.

With selection battles for Britain's seats in the European parliament soon to rage, Newman, a fundamentalist, junket-spurning Spart looks a certain casualty, set to be replaced by Labour members who can't understand why someone should want to sit at Strasbourg for eight years while campaigning so strongly for the EC's abolition, let alone while displaying such hostility to the EC's "hospitality" circuit.

A quick spell on the dole queue will remind Newman how the proles live: his £30,000-plus salary for warning Europe about the horrors of capitalism makes him one of the richest men in recession-ravaged Manchester.

But which of the vultures hovering over Newman's seat is likely to win the five-year sinecure? The main contenders are ex-GLC councillor Michael Ward, once deputy to Red Ken himself; city council housing chairman Dave Lunts, an ex-railway signalman with a 2(i) degree in politics; and most insidiously of all Jack Flanagan, city councillor and deputy chairman of Manchester airport, from where he has begun many a freebie while representing the face of true northern grittiness abroad.

'Backbiter'

The New Boys are in recess

Grovel

I HEAR of an amusing incident involving my friend Philippa Leech, the blonde bombshell *Mail on Sunday* secretary who occasionally escorts Andrew "Brillo Pad" Neill.

One day, shortly before the Mellor affair broke, the minister of fun was doing a BBC radio interview along with Brillo Pad. Sitting outside the studio were Judith Mellor and Philippa Leech, whose skirt was so skimpy that it revealed her white stocking tops. When Mellor emerged, his wife asked him in a voice loud enough to be overheard by Ms Leech: "Do you think that girl is a prostitute?"

Ever since Philippa has been professing her outrage at this suggestion and describing Mrs Mellor to colleagues as a ghastly, common little woman.

I STRONGLY disagree with the view that National Heritage Secretary David Mellor should resign.

As Chairman of the British Tourist Authority and the English Tourist Board, I know him very well and have great respect for his abilities.

There is a big job to be done, and I have no doubt that he will make a success of it. It would be a tragedy to lose him because of what has happened in his private life.

WILLIAM DAVIS,
London.

Letter in Daily Mail

Submitted by Peter James.

£10 paid for all entries put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose

ANDREW NEILL himself has been lowering the tone at the recent Cartier polo classic at Smith's lawn, Windsor.

This event is now packed with celebrities like Michael VerMeulen, the editor of *GQ*, and Neill in due course encountered the Chicago foghorn.

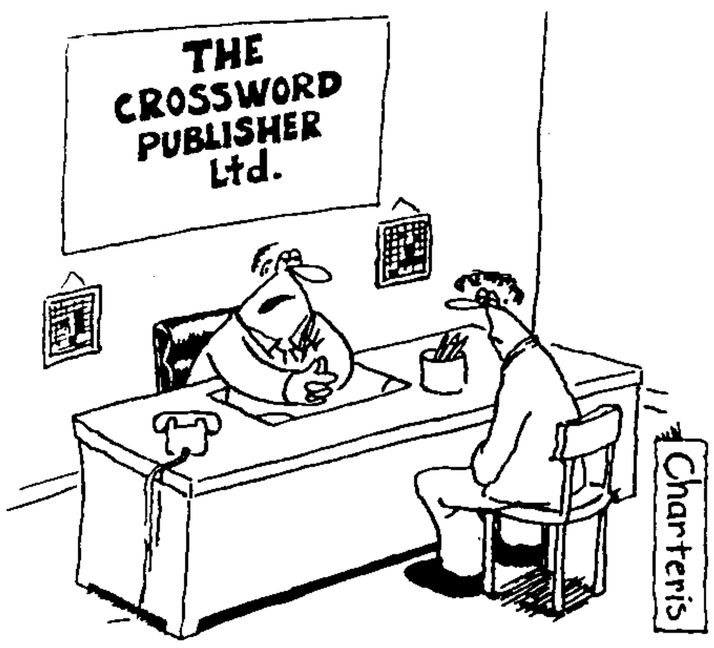
VerMeulen was standing in the lavatory when Neill bounded in, his beige designer suit drenched from his loins to his knees.

"What happened to you?" inquired the VerMeulen breezily.

"My, er, girlfriend, er, spilt some champagne," Brillo Pad explained.

"Oh," said VerMeulen with a lewd glint in his eye, "I thought maybe she'd sat in your lap."

"I wish!" was Neill's anguished reply.



"I'm sorry, Booth, you're F, blank, blank, blank, D: as from a gun"

Pseuds Corner

'Diana's story taps into certain deep and powerful strains in our culture that suggest the ancient archetypes of conventional womanhood are not obsolete but stronger and deeper than ever.' Camille Paglia explains why Diana should be taken seriously.

Guardian

... It is the quince which has prompted what I consider to be my latest culinary *chef d'oeuvre*. For a lunch party, scoops of quince ice-cream are placed on turn-of-the-century Venetian dishes, its intriguing pink-orange colour set off to advantage against the emerald, gold-spangled stripes of the glass. Two delicate biscuits are arranged to one side, and a scattering of toasted almonds or a dribble of quince syrup complete the picture. Each dish is then set on a porcelain plate and thence to the table. A certain puzzled silence always follows the first mouthful. "What is it?" "Guess," I invariably reply. People rarely do.

ROY STRONG
Country Life

... Dirty [by Sonic Youth] is a heavy-hitting collection of roaring guitar noise, wedded to lyrics which snag like tumbleweeds on the cactuses of the brain.

ADAM SWEETING
Guardian

This was formula one polo, yet the game seemed to have retained its purity and innocence despite the presence of eight pros. The glittering crowd may have had something to do with it. I sat with Jamie Packer, Tania Bryer and Jilly Cooper and her husband, and one can't do better than that.

TAKI
Spectator

To [Avital] Ronell, the telephone is an *utterance we have to respond to.* She does not philosophize from the acting subject that picks up the handset and dials the desired number. In her ears telephoning is *a question of answerability.* Her question is, *what does it mean to answer the telephone?* She describes the *transcendental predicament of accepting a call.* ... "Static has this wonderful semantic range of meaning," explains Ronell. "Parasitic noise and random eruption has always been a constituent part of language but a part that's been kind of obliterated."

GEERT LOVINK
Mediamatic Arts Magazine

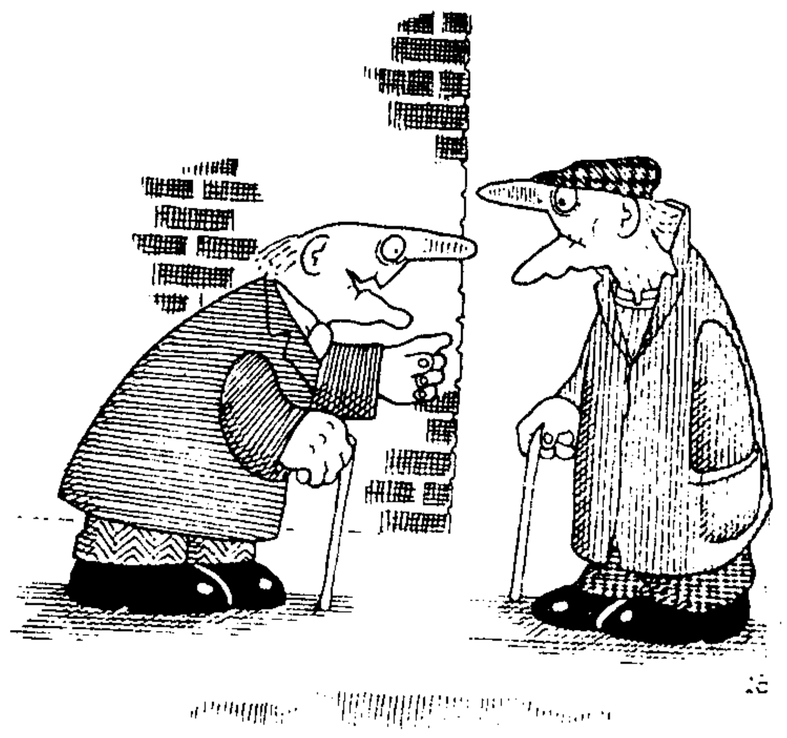
Beneath a pale vault of sky, upon an island in the Atlantic Ocean, a man is running, and this run is a brief revelation of pure physical glory, part human, part animal, part transcendent of both. As I watch, I am quickening to the single thought that this man, for these few moments, is probably running faster than any other man on earth. The island is Lanzarote, the man is Linford Christie, but both are momentarily nameless.

This island is savage, blackened, proudly ruined, as if a god had a colossal tantrum and laid it to magnificent, careless waste. With a sense of endlessness contained only by a sense of the sea beyond, the earth slopes and drops away from one's eyes in charcoal heaps of volcanic ash...

LAURA THOMPSON
Esquire

CONTRIBUTORS: Brian E. Hebert, Clarrie Grundy, Stephen Meldrum, Anon, Phil Baker, Alex Williams.

£10 paid for entries



"Isn't that the Old Jarrovian collarless shirt?"

THE BBC's new snobbery quiz show, *P&Qs,* has attracted a great deal of attention. More perhaps than the Beeb hoped, having put it out in August.

Certainly the contestants were unsure about it merits during production, with heavy editing needed whenever a tired and emotional Jonathan Meades said: "Fuck this, I don't know why I'm doing it".

The reason giggly ex-deb Victoria Mather took part in the show is less of a mystery. As she remarked recently at lunch: "The recession *is* serious. I've only got one daily."

● *TO THE Groucho Club where I am somewhat saddened to observe the antics of an evidently tired and emotional showbusiness solicitor, aptly named Woolf.*

It is early in the evening and yet he is sitting in the bar area engaging in some heavy petting with an unidentified woman of substantial proportions.

A little later, I retire to the gentleman's to ablute and I am disturbed to hear female shrieks and gasps emanating from one of the two luxury cubicles, followed by the imploring exclamation: "Give it to me! Give it to me big!"

Naturally, I report these bizarre goings-on to the reception staff who subsequently tell me that Woolf's guest had accidentally locked herself in the gents for half an hour.

The woman was, I presume, a client of Mr Woolf's and her extraordinary remarks in the gents were a reference to his fees.

I LEARN that Mick "The Bruiser" Newmarch, who considers that he earns every penny of his £650,000 salary as chief executive of the Prudential, has been axing less essential employees than himself with a touch too much vigour.

His latest victim has been the Pru's office at Welwyn where household and motor policies were handled. Unfortunately, it perished before there was even time to issue the Bruiser's own certificate of motor insurance — as the police discovered when they stopped Mick for a routine check.

● *I AM delighted to report that my bowler-hatted friend the Hon Christopher Monckton, who will in due course become a viscount, is recovering well from the trauma of being sacked from the Evening Standard last month.*

With the six-figure cheque he collected as his pay-off from Lord Rothermere, Christopher has purchased a large estate in Perthshire. "At last," one of his friends comments, "Christopher can live in the sort of house that befits a man of his rank."

Now all the poor boy needs is a job. Any offers?

Pip Pip!

NOOKS and CORNERS

ARCHITECTS used not to sue — apart, that is, from the ageing journalist, litigant and vandal Stephen Gardiner (*Eyes passim*). **But now, I am sorry to report, "Sir" Richard Rogers has extracted damages, costs and an apology from the** *Evening Standard* **over an article published on 16 September last year entitled** IS CHARLES THE TRUE HEIR OF CIVILISATION? **This action followed the similarly lucrative settlement on behalf of Sir Norman Foster over the same alleged libel.**

The offending article, written by Mira Bar-Hillel, was concerned with the Prince of Wales's summer school for architects at the Villa Lante, and included a passage which suggested that over at the Venice Biennale, the usual bunch of "leading" architects were patting each other on the back while the British contingent, which included Sir Richard Rogers, Sir Norman Foster, and James Stirling, discussed the prince in terms which, according to the wife of the British ambassador, were said to range from the abusive to the unprintable.

Impossible! As we all know, architects — especially knighted ones — when gathered together always drink loyal toasts to the heir to the throne. The late (Sir) James Stirling, of course, did once compare the Prince of Wales to Hitler, but that was before he got his handle. But it is unthinkable that Richard Rogers, the notable Labour voter who was pleased to take an honour from the prince's mum to enable his American wife Ruthie to become Lady Rogers, could ever have uttered a disloyal remark, even if HRH may have been instrumental in losing him both the National Gallery extension and Paternoster Square. As for apolitical Norman Foster, no profanity ever passes his lips. So of course our knighted architects had to defend their reputations.

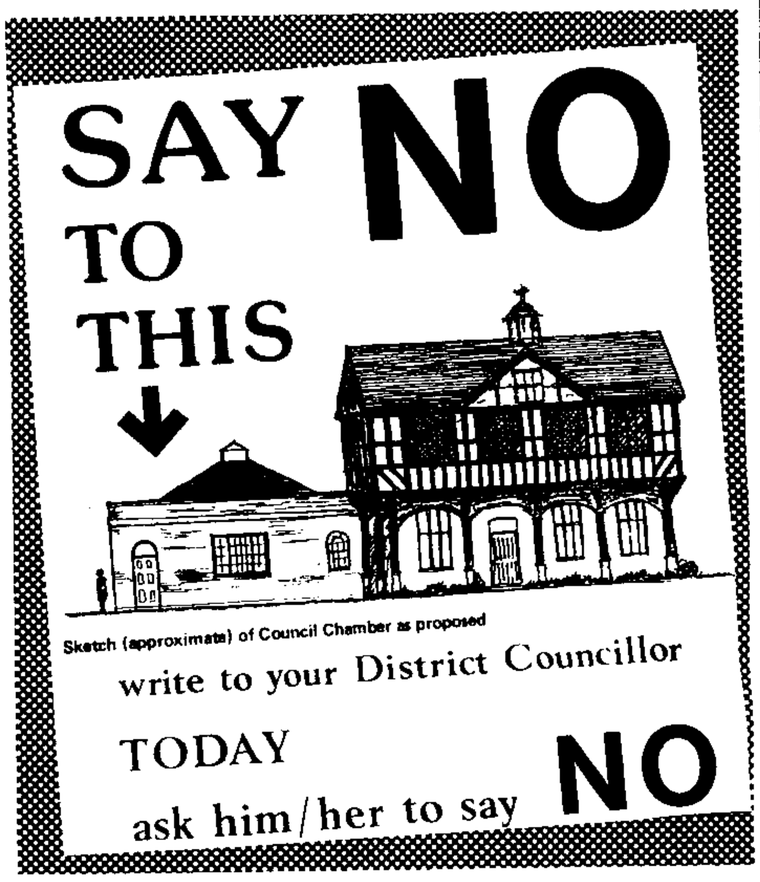
Nowhere did the offending paragraph directly attribute criticism of the prince to any of our beknighted architects; it was merely observed that they added lustre to a group of British architects, some of whose less circumspect members, it grieves me to believe, may have uttered disloyal sentiments. Were Sir Dick and Sir Norm really damaged by such a brief and oblique reference in a London evening paper? Why on earth are they so concerned?

We flatter ourselves that we have a free press, but when it comes to architecture we do not. Our stars have it all their own way. Rogers and Foster, together with the late Sir Big Jim, are lauded by the professional press at home and abroad, and they enjoyed a unique sales promotion at the Royal Academy which masqueraded as an exhibition. Forget about their working-class, radical or outsider posturing; they are the establishment — Sir Norm's new terminal at Stansted Airport was even praised by Sir Peregrine Worsthorne.

As for Rogers, star of countless colour supplements, whose sexual exploits titivated Bryan Appleyard's hagiography, who could be more glamorous and successful? Never mind that Lloyd's is a flop and that the ungrateful underwriters have withdrawn his free pass to his masterpiece; who dares to attempt to tarnish his reputation? Certainly not the architectural journals. Our knighted architects merely have to threaten to withhold photos or drawings of their latest masterpiece if the tone or authorship of a projected article offends and the craven, sycophantic editors cave in — never daring to call their shameful bluffs.

So why do Sir Richard Rogers and Sir Norman Foster emulate the writ-happy example of the late Robert Maxwell? For, please note, they sued "that damned Israeli woman" herself, who is freelance, in addition to the *Standard* (which, to its credit, supported its contributor). This can only be interpreted as rich knighted architects using their legal might to silence a rare unsycophantic voice. One might not always agree with Ms Bar-Hillel, but it is splendid that she dares to remain unimpressed by the architectural establishment.

So why did they sue? Are Richard and Norm so insecure? Could it be that, despite all the hype, our knighted architects know, deep down, that their exalted reputations are undeserved, that there really is more to architecture than the awful disposition of pipes, wires and gaskets?



MY PICTURE shows Leominster's Old Market Hall, a famous timber structure originally erected by James Abel in 1633 on another site in the Herefordshire town. It now appears to stand in proud isolation — but not for long. It is proposed to build a new council chamber and offices immediately alongside.

Comment seems superfluous when both the supine British Heritage and DoE have failed to object. But it is worth observing that planning permission would never have been granted by Leominster district council (Con) for such a building on so sensitive a site had the owner been any other than, er, Leominster district council.

'Piloti'

POLICE 5

THE RELEASE earlier this year of Judith Ward was heralded by the media as an end to the saga of miscarriages of justice resulting from the bungled efforts of British police to combat IRA bombers in the early seventies. But supporters of Frank Johnson think otherwise.

Johnson and two other men were convicted in September 1976 of the murders of his employer, John Sheridan, who died following a petrol attack at this Whitechapel newsagents. The day after the incident, the local newspaper ran the headline IRA BEHIND HUMAN TORCH ATTACK. Johnson was only charged 10 months after the killing, and the only real evidence against him being the statements of his two co-defendants, Jack "Five Bullets" Tierney and David Smart. Both Tierney and Smart, who confessed their role in the attack to police, have since been released from prison.

"Five Bullets" — so nicknamed after he survived being shot five times in an argument over the proceeds of an armed robbery in the Irish Republic — was an active police informer handled by a Det Sgt Hutchinson of Hampstead police station. In 1972 "Five Bullets" and a WPC secretly recorded a conversation with alleged members of the Angry Brigade in which they offered to sell guns to the would-be anarchist revolutionaries.

In October 1974, at the height of the IRA bombing campaign, Tierney contacted Frank Johnson — who knew him from Ireland — after the latter had come to London following his release from a jail term there for a minor firearms offence. Johnson says "Five Bullets" made persistent efforts to involve him in armed robberies the informer was planning.

The attack on Sheridan carried out by Tierney and Smart was to be portrayed as part of a brutal IRA protection racket, which explains the otherwise unfounded story in the local press. This went wrong when Johnson — who, unknown to the attackers, was in the back of the shop — doused the flames enveloping Sheridan. The shopkeeper survived for three weeks in hospital, during which time he appears to have made a number of statements to police officers, although they later denied this.

"Five Bullets" was offered an acquittal by police if he helped implicate Frank as the main instigator of a conspiracy to rob Sheridan, thus clearing up any awkward questions about the links between Tierney, the police and the attempt to smear the IRA. Later the police went back on the deal.

Amazingly enough the judge allowed the prosecution of Johnson to go ahead, even though the statements of Tierney and Smart, along with circumstantial evidence relating to Sheridan's shop while the latter was in hospital, were the only pieces of evidence against him.

Perhaps unwisely Johnson dismissed his counsel at the beginning of the trial after they failed to get the charges dismissed. He was given two hours to prepare his case and a number of key elements of the defence were not brought to court. There has never been a proper hearing at the appeal court, and because Johnson maintains his innocence he will not be granted parole.

ONE interesting story the propaganda unit at Greater Manchester police headquarters has failed to reveal is the one about the car which mysteriously blew up at 3 o'clock in the morning while parked on a quiet suburban Manchester street outside its owner's house.

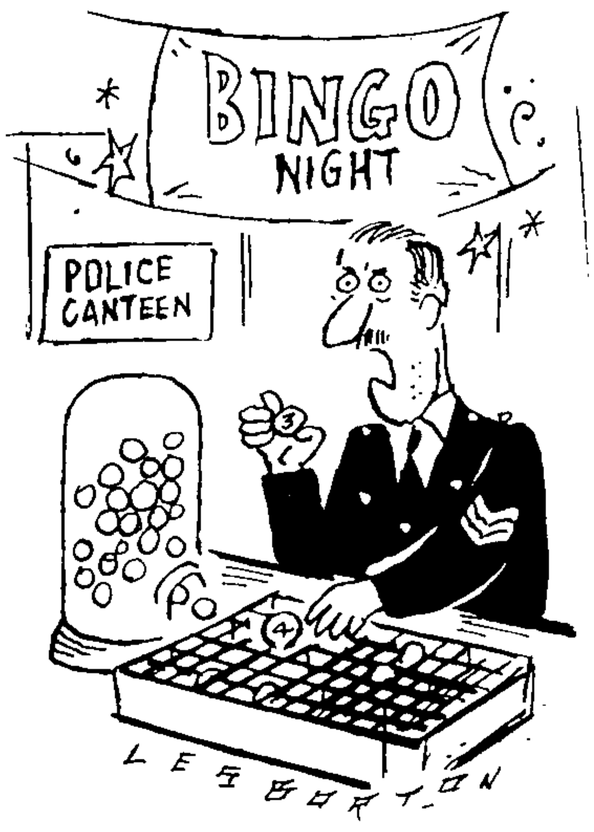
Tales about exploding cars that may be attributable to IRA bombers, other terrorists or even everyday criminals are usually hot news. Yet this remarkable tale has had no coverage in the local press, nor, bizarrely, are Greater Manchester police investigating the incident further.

Why the official secrecy?

The car belonged to police constable David Wilkinson, who was part of the six-man team which investigated criminal allegations against Ged Corley, the Manchester copper jailed in 1989 for supplying weapons to criminals (see *Eyes passim ad nauseam*). Corley, of course, has now been exonerated of any criminal activity and recently collared quarter-of-a-million pounds from GMP's insurers for being wrongfully convicted.

Wilkinson, however, is one of only two officers who was involved in the Corley case throughout the entire proceedings, the other being ex-Inspector Peter Jackson, currently on trial for alleged perjury and perverting the course of justice over his role in the affair. While investigating Corley in 1988, Jackson and Wilkinson were threatened on a number of occasions by various villains. Indeed Jackson was recently warned outside Wakefield magistrates' court by one ex-con that members of Manchester's criminal fraternity were going to "sort him out".

Thankfully no harm has yet come Jackson's way, but then again nor had any harm come PC Wilkinson's way. Until recently...



"Open the door – Guildford Four. Set them free – Tottenham Three..."

TV

A Stab In The Dark

(C4)

THE train-set every television executive most wants is a late-night satirical current affairs show. Paul (brother of the more famous Jonathan) Ross has given Michael Grade *A Stab in the Dark*. Unfortunately, the new Friday series is so bad that, for the first time in modern civilisation, the phrase "Thank God it isn't Friday" has entered common usage.

Admittedly, the show's witless trinity of presenters — Michael Gove, Tracy Macleod and David Baddiel — are being spoken of as the new TW3. But only in a specialised sense: Those Were The Wankers That Were.

Wankers is a word they use a lot on *A Stab in the Dark*. Others are "bowel movement", "git" and "piss". This is to establish that the show is different from other current affairs programmes — you know, those stuffy establishment shows where they bother to find out what is going on in the world and then comment intelligently on it. *A Stab in the Dark* wouldn't be caught dead getting involved in that kind of malarkey. It is supposed to be dangerous, edgy, wired, out on a limb and, hopefully, out on its ear pretty soon.

The show has the format of short comment pieces to camera. These are so generalised and lacking bite that, for the first 20 minutes, you keep thinking that each of these squibs is the introduction to a filmed report (the general television convention). But they aren't. That's all, folks.

Nor are scripts well served by delivery. The three presenters might well go on to play the weird sisters in an expressionist production of *Macbeth*, but they should probably not be offered another current affairs programme. No hosts have looked so unhappy in front of the cameras since John Timpson unwisely left radio's *Today* for television's *Tonight* in the seventies.

David Baddiel — looking

cocky in granny glasses — shifts violently from one foot to the other, occasionally swaying from side to side as variation, while delivering his wacky monologues. Michael Gove — a repressed Scot in stiff suit, who is supposed to cover politics — blushes when his turn comes and goes a touching Surrey Major red when attempting to be aggressive in interviews. Tracy Macleod, the most experienced of the three, is technically efficient but the trap for her is not nerves but embarrassment. As Tracy delivered a monologue on the tendency of men to piss in public after leaving pubs — a matter of grave national importance, apparently — you could see dawning in her eyes the realisation that interviewing dead Turkish minimalist film directors on *The Late Show* might be more her forte.

Also, it has to be said that a show which gets so heated up about late-night public urination — while passing over the Bosnian crisis as a matter "no one understands and few care about" — might be questioned on its satirical agenda. Most of the pieces have a whiff of the *Isis* slush pile.

But, as its title accidentally concedes, *A Stab in the Dark* is almost bound to miss the target. On one occasion, the MP Diane Abbott, being interviewed by Gove, mentions that Robert Maxwell's activities were only truthfully written about when he was dead. "That's because he owned the papers," cracks Gove. The audience dutifully giggled. But Maxwell's British newspaper holdings were paltry compared to Murdoch's or Rothermere's, so the joke has no point, the real targets of libel law and Establishment fawning slipping past again.

By the end of the show, the three can barely stand up for the lead balloons around their feet. Sent to Barcelona to interview locals and visitors about the Olympics, Baddiel chats to a courteous American tourist. As the man walks away, Baddiel confides to the camera: "What a sad git!" Baddiel gets a laugh — but, given the choice between spending an evening with the American or with Baddiel, most viewers would surely have chosen the former.

Symptomatically, a Tracy Macleod monologue had as its punch-line a 10-year-old Julie Burchill pun (uncredited). Get back to those dead Turkish film directors quickly, Trace, while you can.

'Square Eyes'

MEDIA NEWS

BARBARA MILLS, the director of public prosecutions, has helped create legal history by prosecuting Channel 4 and Box Productions over *The Committee*. Journalists now face far more pressure to reveal their sources.

Mrs Mills, however, has not always taken this line: when she became DPP in April, she was involved in a fracas with *The Lawyer* magazine on just this point.

The Lawyer had named her as the source of comments which had appeared in the press, blaming the length of the Blue Arrow trial on the judge. The magazine said it was not bound by the unattributable terms of Mrs Mills' press conference — which took place while the jury was out — because it had not been invited to or been involved in the briefing.

Mrs Mills was furious when it was publicly revealed that she had criticised the judge while the jury was out. She tried to refer the matter to the Press Complaints Commission on the grounds that journalists should protect their sources. She asked the PCC for advice on how to frame a complaint, but no formal complaint was ever made. It would appear that there were no grounds on which to complain.

Of course if Mrs Mills wanted to clear *her* name in this matter she could release the tape recording her office made of the off-the-record briefing. Or perhaps she thinks that DPPs, unlike journalists, should not be fettered by the contempt of court provisions.

AS PART of his cost-saving campaign at the BBC, John Birt sold the corporation's television and film studios at Ealing to a company called the BBRK Group last month. The purchase price was rather less than £6 million.

Even by Birt's eccentric standards, this is a barmy wheeze. The BBC has promised that it will continue to use the studios for filming — paying BBRK a handsome rent for the privilege. It is also leasing back another 19,000 sq ft of the Ealing site as office space. While these are refurbished, it is renting an office block nearby. Meanwhile, the BBC must also rent or buy yet more space for the post-production staff (film editors, etc) who are to be moved from Ealing.

It takes a genius to sell the freehold of a building at the bottom of the property market and then lease it back, spending a fortune refurbishing it while hiring "temporary" space elsewhere.

Unsurprisingly, the BBC refuses to say how much this is all costing, but rumour has it that the rent alone will be £800,000 a year. If this is John Birt's idea of an "economy", perhaps he should ask his great friend Sir Peter Jaybotham to give him a crash course in economics for beginners.

CORPORATION STREET W.12
An everyday story of Broadcasting Folk
"NOBODY'S WATCHING EL DORADO..."
SO WE'RE CHANGING THE CAST...
Ratings
BUT WHO'D BE SO DESPERATE TO WANT TO APPEAR IN THAT SLOT?...
"Trebles & a complete waste of £10 million all round!"
IT'S YOUR OLD THESPIAN TEL, HERE!"
BAR
Ken Pyne

FOLLOWING the axing of *Wogan*, BBC executives are desperate to find a new role for the overpaid Irishman.

To the astonishment of his colleagues, Wogan's executive producer Peter Estall plucked obscure beefcake researcher Nicholas Lazarus from the ranks to oversee the new Wogan show.

Fortunately, however, Estall's infatuation with Lazarus's televisual abilities was shortlived, so he has now turned to former *Wogan* producer Jane O'Brien to come up with an exciting and original vehicle for the star.

The upshot of these months of activity? Viewers will soon be able to see Wogan presenting — wait for it — a satirical look back at the week's news.

THE HACK who has led the campaign to prove the existence of "satanic abuse" of children has come a cropper.

Tim Tate, who made the *Cook Report*'s scaremongering TV programme "Devil's Work" and later became a regular lecturer at satanic abuse seminars, has been forced to withdraw his book *Children For the Devil*, admitting that its allegations were "utterly without foundation".

When the book was published, Tate claimed that he had "proved" the existence of widespread ritual abuse (see *Eye* 772). The book included a fierce attack on Det Supt Peter Coles, the policeman in charge of investigating a case of alleged "satanic abuse" in Nottinghamshire. Coles's offence, it seems, was that he found no evidence to support the absurd claims made by Tate. Tate accused him of "obstructing" the investigation and putting children at risk.

But when Coles began a libel suit against Tate, the author immediately capitulated, admitting that his account of the Nottingham case was riddled with falsehoods and "should never have been published". The book has now been pulped.

A BBC lawyer has been uncovered representing a controversial international businessman who was exposed for mistreating imported servants.

Kuldip Sanghera, a solicitor in the BBC Enterprises legal department, has been acting for one Prakash Mehta, exposed last year by Granada TV's *World in Action* for exploiting "servants" imported from India.

Mehta's speciality was to offer fellow-Indians well-paid jobs in London and then make them his personal servants — sometimes forcing them to work 15-hour days. On one occasion he unlawfully confiscated his servant's passport. When the distraught man complained, Mehta responded sweetly: "You are free to inform the police of my illegal act as I refuse to comply with your request."

After the *World in Action* film, BRITAIN'S SECRET SLAVES, Mehta bellyached to the Broadcasting Complaints Commission (BCC). At the BCC hearing Mehta turned up with Sanghera and announced that Sanghera was there as his "friend". Yet the "friend" was billed as Mehta's solicitor and spoke for him during the session. Sanghera had also approached Granada TV before the programme's transmission acting as Mehta's lawyer.

After the BCC hearing, Granada was astonished to discover that Sanghera worked full-time for the BBC and has since informed the Beeb about his links with the unsavoury Mehta.

HACK WATCH No 27: Edward Pearce

IN 1978, as a leader writer on the *Daily Express*, Edward Pearce announced that he was switching his allegiance from Labour to the Tories because he was so impressed by Margaret Thatcher. Ten years later, shortly before being sacked by the *Daily Telegraph*, he said it had all been a terrible mistake.

Denouncing Thatcher as a mad tyrant, he reverted to Labour and started writing for the *New Statesman*. After the overthrow of Thatcher, however, he became the cheerleader (and adoring biographer) of John Major. From his present perch, on the leader page of the *Grauniad*, he continually condemns the government while never breathing a word of criticism of the prime minister.

It is a hard act to maintain. Perhaps by the end of the year he will have lurched off in yet another direction, aligning himself with the Welsh Nationalists or the Monster Raving Loonies.

Throughout all these tergiversations, Pearce has remained unfailingly inaccurate in his judgements. A year ago, attempting to justify his spectacularly inaccurate assessment of the attempted coup in Moscow, he wrote: "It is as well sometimes to be wrong." Sometimes, perhaps. But what is one to make of a newspaper columnist who is wrong quite as often as Ed Pearce?

On the likelihood of a Gulf War: "Terrible and wrong as a war would be, there is something comforting in the fo-fummery of Mr Bush. A man truly disposed to war, and ready to commit all the attendant crimes, does not talk like that." (*Guardian*, 2 January 1991.) A fortnight later, Bush started bombing Baghdad.

On the 1991 Soviet coup: "The putsch is a plain fact without a Machiavellian wrap. But there is every reason to think that it will succeed. It will do so because military coups usually do succeed, because insensitive men can sit very comfortably on a throne of bayonets, because the indignation of the people on the streets counts for nothing... Please let us understand that we are talking about power — Faith, Hope and Power, and the greatest of these is Power. In the Soviet Union, the generals have it and the crowds on the Moscow streets have it not. Nothing else matters." (*Guardian*, 21 August 1991.)

On Boris Yeltsin: In 1989, Pearce denounced the *Observer* for daring to suggest that Yeltsin was a demagogue and potential despot — "a serious smear" which was "almost certainly actionable". Yeltsin, Pearce wrote, "identifies with ordinary people", "hates corruption" and "has let oxygen into a system long sealed and curtained". (*Sunday Times*, 2 April 1989.) Two years later, Pearce returned to the subject: "History... will not applaud Boris Yeltsin. Essentially a parasitical politician, he has had little to do with governing, everything to do with destroying... he looks the least of democrats and readiest of quick-fix despots." (*Guardian*, 28 August 1991.)

On Dr David Owen: "One is impressed by Dr Owen: 25 minutes exactly, delivered with folded arms and no notes... [his opinions] are not to be shrugged off." (*Daily Telegraph*, 14 November 1985.) "That wretched, rash, intruding fool, to whom we hopefully bid farewell, was a bundle of truculent reflections from the hip." (*Guardian*, 5 August 1992.)

On NUPE leader Bernard Dix: "Thatcher... benefited from the activities in 1979 of two NUPE leaders, Alan Fisher and Bernard Dix, both now dead, both infantile fantasists." (*Guardian*, 8 April 1992.) "Apology is delightedly made to Bernard Dix, pronounced dead here recently, happily still alive." (*Guardian*, 29 April 1992.)

On the police: After attending the Police Federation's annual conference this year, Pearce criticised chief constables for "getting out of touch with the rank and file" (*Guardian*, 27 May 1992). He supported the federation's demand that constables should be given bigger truncheons, and attacked liberals who whinge about police corruption. Strangely, Pearce neglected to mention that he used to be employed by the Police Federation.

On David Mellor: "Mr David Mellor in the drugs debate was fairly dire. Mr Mellor could well be commercially viable to the oil companies. One sees Texaco and Tricentrol buying large blocks of him and drilling in the fields they had acquired... If Mr Mellor were a worm, he would send a vote of thanks to the harrow... he proclaimed like a demented drum majorette." (*Daily Telegraph*, 10 October 1985.) But when Mellor was appointed arts minister, five years later, Pearce penned a full-page eulogy: "An obsessive collector of compact discs, knowledgeable about Glazunov, eloquent advocate of the lesser-known Elgar (I've heard him lecture impressively on the merits of Elgar's underperformed choral works, *The Spirit of England* and *The Musicmakers*), David Mellor was 'one of us' in spades." (*Evening Standard*, 29 November 1991.)

On flattery: "It was Adlai Stevenson, one of the last men of real quality to seek the US presidency, who remarked that flattery was all right 'providing you don't inhale'." (*Guardian*, 26 February 1992.)

"Adlai Stevenson, most gifted of contenders in the last 40 years... [observed] that flattery was fine as long as you didn't inhale." (*Guardian*, 5 August 1992.)

On the 1988 American presidential election: "Dukakis is admirably fitted to be president and I rather think that, faced with that boiled lamprey of acquiescence, George Bush, he is going to be president." (*Sunday Times*, 8 May 1988.)

On the 1992 American presidential election: "One could write about the decline of the Democratic convention... But if anyone thinks I mean to waste 1080 words on Bill Clinton and Albert Gore they are sublimely mistaken." (*Guardian*, 22 July 1992.) Two weeks later, Pearce duly wasted 1080 words on Clinton and Gore. He concluded that they will beat Bush and Quayle. "The US seems poised to shift from the President it deserves to the President it deserves even more." (*Guardian*, 5 August 1992.)

On Labour's chances in the general election: "Mr Kinnock the kicker of bottoms at conference and NEC was magnificent. The party he made, now poised for power tomorrow..." (*Guardian*, 8 April 1992.)

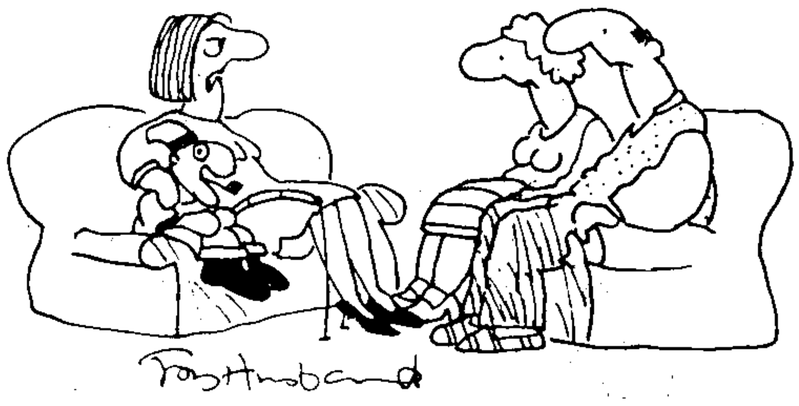
On the Tories' chances: "[Nigel] Lawson helped bring about the second army of unemployed and the failed businesses whose condition seems likely to drive the Tories disgraced out of power." (*Guardian*, 8 April 1992.)

On his political prescience: "I sometimes think that smart politicians might come across to this column with a jolly little five figure consultancy... on how to win the election." (*Guardian*, 4 March 1992.) "Unless all polls are nonsense, which I don't believe, or my perceptions are worthless, something I humbly doubt..." (*Guardian*, 15 April 1992.)

RICHARD JOBSON'S success as presenter of the absurd *Men Talk* is not finding favour with his bosses on his other programme, *01*.

In fact Jobson and *01* producer Ian Dunkley have had a number of vigorous discussions on the direction of the Scotsman's presenting career, resulting in Jobson sporting a less-than-fashionable black eye.

Wags at Channel Four are now reminding each other of the adage that you can take a man out of Glasgow, but ye cannae take Glasgow out of the man...



"It's 'cause he's a garden gnome, isn't it?"

ARMS NEWS

HOW many insurance policies does Royal Ordnance have with which to compensate its workers who are maimed or injured while clearing the mines in Kuwait?

The British Aerospace subsidiary has, as the *Eye* has reported, the lion's share of the desert clearance work and has recruited extensively from private companies and used the Royal Engineers under contract from the ministry of defence for this dangerous task. It has also used Gurkhas at a fraction of the normal pay rates — but we urge readers to keep this latter news confidential.

As is well known, accidents are not uncommon and deaths have occurred. One "bonus" of this dangerous work, if you are not on soldiers' pay, is its rewards and settlement if injury or death should occur. Royal Ordnance has an insurance policy to cover this — or then again maybe it has two.

A Mr Hugh Mulgrew, who received injuries to his hand and lost a finger and thumb, has put in an insurance claim which is being contested. Under the official RO policy he should be eligible for up to £500,000 for his injuries. But in a strange coincidence his lawyers have received a copy of another policy from Kuwait which suggested that the injury and life benefit might be closer to £1 million.

A Mr Renick, who lost a leg in mine clearance work, was paid out in full under the lesser policy, and was told by RO personnel that the larger policy was only a draft. He, however, remains unconvinced that he has received a full and satisfactory explanation. Royal Ordnance has confirmed that there are two policies, but insist the £1 million cover was a draft.

While sappers or their lawyers can have a look at the £500,000 policy if they want to, it is not easily available for inspection. The *Eye* has spoken to people injured during mine clearance and all are unhappy about the policies. Why, if there is only a draft policy for the £1 million cover, was it reduced to half its value? And why is there such mystery over the clarification of the two documents? Some mine clearers may be forgiven for thinking that they have been had in more ways than one.

DOWN ON THE FARM

with 'Old Muckspreader'

THE IDEA of youngsters enjoying themselves on land earning a government subsidy for doing nothing has thrown the increasingly right-wing National Farmers' Union into a lather of civic outrage.

"It's a farce — an absolute scandal," rages head baron David Naish, incensed at the sight of "travellers" picking up their social security cash from mobile dole offices. "Pandering to their demands is an insult to taxpayers."

Instead of cluttering up the lanes with their broken-down and unlicensed vehicles they should smarten themselves up and report to employment offices in the town, says the NFU. Thus country dwellers would be free to continue their time-honoured pursuit of slaughtering the wildlife.

However, with subsidies for everything from putting on their wellies to drying their socks on the Rayburn, the good yeomen themselves receive 50 per cent of their incomes in the form of government giros.

Like the sun and rain, government cheques arrive in their due season. But, like the travellers, perhaps the barons should be made to pick them up each week. They could do this at the local MAFF office where, properly turned out in slurry-stained overalls they would be required to sign on as available for set-aside.

It would still mean the streets being cluttered with broken-down unlicensed vehicles, of course. But it's better than insulting the taxpayer....

THE prime minister says he enjoys his Huntingdon constituency because he likes trees. He clearly hasn't noticed that the area has lost 90 per cent of its trees and hedges since the war and now boasts more prairie-like fields than almost any other county. But then he is from Brixton.

Even so, as patron of the new Cambridgeshire Woodland Trust John Major might have been expected to put up a stout defence of one of the county's few remaining largescale areas of ancient woodland.

To the alarm of locals the ministry of defence is to sell the 324-acre Brampton Wood, haunt of ramblers and the rare Black Hairstreak butterfly. Not surprisingly they have appealed to the nice, tree-loving Mr Major. On the eve of the Earth Summit he told them the wood was safe. On his return from Rio he had apparently changed his mind — the wood was to be sold after all.

But there was no need to worry, he assured them. No matter who bought Brampton Wood it was protected from damage by its status as a site of special scientific interest. Strangely, his words brought little comfort: perhaps because the nearby Brampton Meadow — also designated SSSI and famous for its green-winged orchids — is currently being bulldozed to make away for the A604 trunk road.

There is, though, some consolation for Huntingdon nature lovers. Under the PM's patronage the trust has just made its first purchase — 3½ acres costing £12,000, about four times the going rate. Net loss to the woodland enthusiasts — 320 acres. Heaven help them if they ever get an MP who doesn't like trees.

OLD MUCK'S Golden Dungfork award for services to the environment goes to the Scottish Office Agriculture Department. It has ordered seed potato growers to drench their crops in pesticide at the merest hint of blackfly.

The bureaucrats think their draconian action will rid Scottish seed crops of virus diseases. They appear not one jot concerned that it's only a single aphid species that spreads aphid disease, and in any case it's easily controlled by good husbandry.

Let one aphid of whatever species drift anywhere near a potato plant and every crop within miles must be drenched in insecticide, says SOAD. Thus beneficial insects like bees and ladybirds will be destroyed. There'll also be perfect conditions for the emergence of a pesticide-resistant super-race of aphids in a few years' time.

Still, there's one thing you can say for the white-collar farmers. They at least provide plenty of business for their chums in the agrochemical industry.

McNUGGET

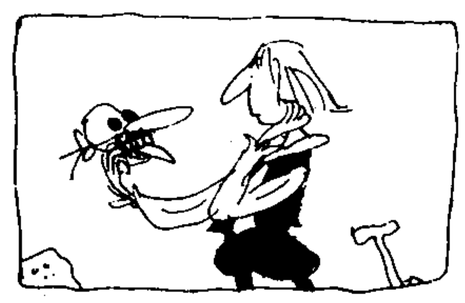
A COMICALLY one-sided legal battle is being waged in the high court between the vast multinational McDonalds Corporation and two supporters of the radical ecological collective London Greenpeace.

McDonalds (represented by highly paid city lawyers Barlow, Lyde and Gilbert) are seeking damages for libel from the two unemployed defendants, Helen Steel and Dave Morris (who are representing themselves), over a factsheet the group produced in 1986. The document made a number of allegations about McDonalds' employment practices, the quality of their "food", and the environmental effects of their operations.

As reported in *Eye* 773, the affair has already broken new ground after the plaintiffs had to admit that their case was based on the defendants' participation in a handful of public events at which the factsheet had allegedly been distributed. Ever since, Steel and Morris have been trying to force McDonalds to reveal further particulars.

The burger merchants, however, have been strangely reticent, and only a recent summons from the defendants forced them to come up with the goods. Their reluctance may be explained by the fact that the latest particulars make it obvious that there was an infiltrator in London Greenpeace.

The trial is expected early next year.



LUVVIES

"Usually when I want to do something, it is preceded by the thought, 'This is impossible. It has to be done.' "

TILDA SWINTON (on Manfred Karge's 'Man to Man', BBC2)
Sunday Times

"The first time I read it I was so emotionally exhausted, moved, and exhilarated I could not read the second act! I had to go and play Mozart's Don Giovanni to let the music relieve the turmoil created by reading the first act!

"Deciding whether or not to do it was a matter of asking myself, 'Do I walk the plank? Do I tear my guts out or take the easy life?' "

JOHN STRIDE (on his role in Melvyn Bragg's new play)
Chichester Observer

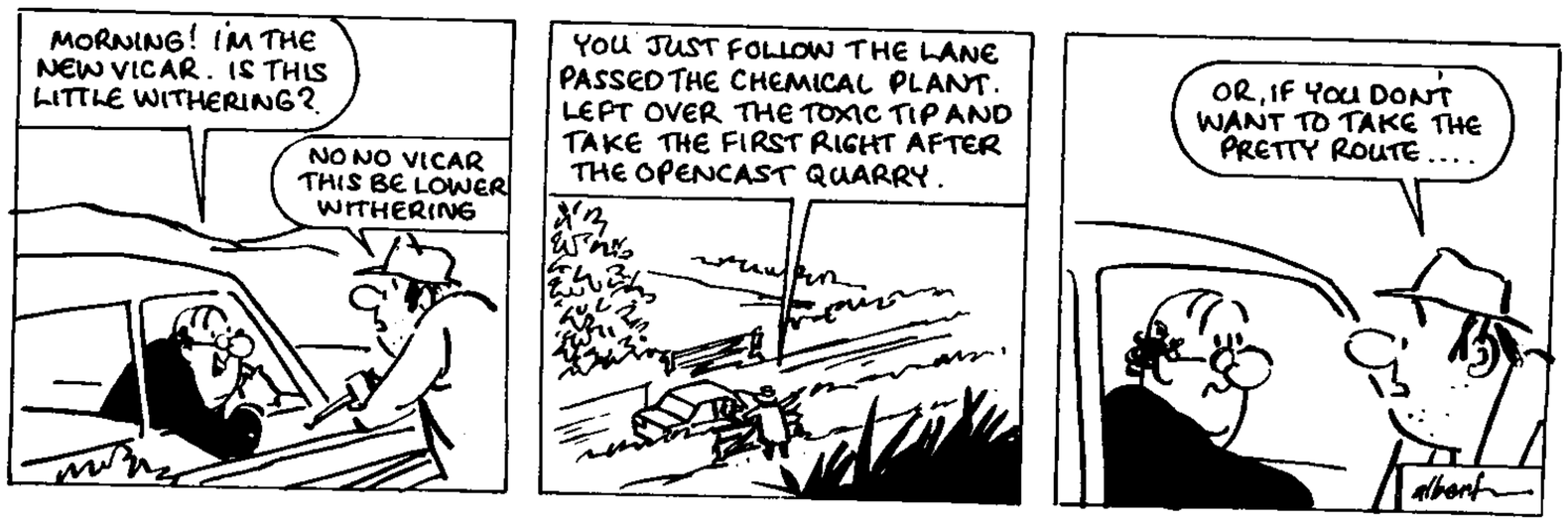
● **NEW WORDS (1):** "Luvvidote" — a theatrical anecdote told by a Luvvie (origin believed to be J. Sessions)

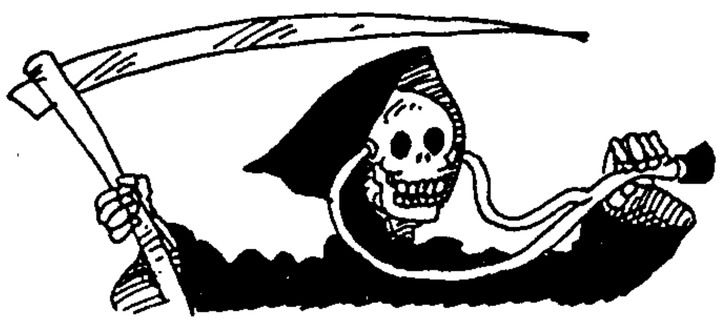
Submitted by Anon, J. Parks.

An occasional column featuring gems from the acting profession. £10 paid for entries printed.

Old Macdonald

ALBERT


MORNING! I'M THE NEW VICAR. IS THIS LITTLE WITHERING?
NO NO VICAR THIS BE LOWER WITHERING
YOU JUST FOLLOW THE LANE PASSED THE CHEMICAL PLANT. LEFT OVER THE TOXIC TIP AND TAKE THE FIRST RIGHT AFTER THE OPENCAST QUARRY.
OR, IF YOU DON'T WANT TO TAKE THE PRETTY ROUTE....
albert



DOING THE ROUNDS

GORGEOUS pouting health secretary Virginia Bottomley is facing up to the failure of her new deal for junior doctors. Even the health department now admits that problems with funding and recruiting extra medical staff make it impossible for health authorities to cut hours to 83 a week, let alone approach the EC average of 59 hours.

Only 32 of the extra 200 consultant posts promised 18 months ago have been funded and 5,300 juniors are still contracted to work for more than 83 hours. Many more exceed the limit by working outside their contracts because there is no one else to do the work. The latter are finding that some health authorities are refusing to insure them against extra contractual cock-ups, but the prospect of a bad reference prevents them from complaining.

Crisis point has been reached in **Bristol's Southmead Health Services NHS Trust** where, following MD's exposure of overstretched doctors (*Eye* 792 and 797), four juniors interviewed on HTV's *The West This Week* told how critically ill patients were kept waiting for up to five hours before a doctor could see them, and at least two had died in waiting — this despite a concerted six-month campaign of internal whistle-blowing to highlight the under-staffing that arose after medical house-officers were cut from 12 to eight while patient numbers increased.

Colin Bould, the personnel director, claims locums are hard to find: hardly surprising as he was under instruction from clinical director of medicine, Dr Peter Harrison, not to look too hard. Indeed, a member of his staff was overheard saying she "forgot" to get locums. The management gamble that juniors would keep quiet for fear of ruining their references has not paid off and Dr Harrison has been forced to resign.

Televised claims from trust chairman Mr Colin Williams that he knew nothing until 9 July appeared embarrassingly thin when a 10 June letter to him from the medical senior house officers was produced. The letter began: "We are writing to express our concern about the alarming situation..." and gave a detailed account of the problems and some sensible solutions.

Mr Williams did not reply, and nor did Mr M.J. Crowson, chairman of **Bristol and District Health Authority** who received a copy. The doctors were then forced to go public. Stephen Day, acting chief executive, was well aware of the problem but has quietly slipped back to his position as finance director, leaving the clinicians to bear the brunt of the punishment.

Mr Williams's feeble attempt to defuse the situation by saying publicly that doctors have been complaining for 40 years and that this was not any different was the final nail in his coffin, and he too has resigned.

Southmead's medical unit is already £300,000 over budget and despite efforts to limit admissions by closing the hospital to GP emergencies (*Eye* 792), desperate GPs now send all medical emergencies (often elderly) to fight it out in the casualty department. Management are petrified that this shoddy treatment will stop GPs referring lucrative surgical patients to Southmead, and thus deprive the trust of its financial lifeline.

● PROBLEMS too for the **Taunton and Somerset NHS Trust**, where the personnel department was "unable" to find locum cover for an orthopaedic houseman, despite being given six weeks' notice.

The enforced absence of a further houseman has meant doctors working 120 hours a week and weekend cover for the orthopaedic wards being provided by an ophthalmologist. In the paediatric department, two senior house officers have been absent without replacement and the trust has been forced to employ a one-handed registrar.

● AT THE **Princes Margaret Rose Orthopaedic Hospital** in **Edinburgh**, the catering manager Ian Muir has been told by the head catering manager of the united services unit, Martin Henry, that unless he got within sight of budget within three months, the in-house contract agreed two years ago (and due to run until April 1993) would be ripped up and all the staff would be sacked.

Mr Henry closed the meeting with a sinister assurance that "ways could be found to stop redundancy payments". The staff, some of whom have worked at PMR for 18 years, have no control over ordering and costing supplies, but many feel that budget levels were set deliberately low to ensure their removal from office prior to trust application. McDonalds, the financial saviours of **Guys NHS Trust**, have been mentioned as successors.

● IN **Birmingham**, an NHS ambulance helicopter service will be grounded without immediate financial support. The service, credited with saving at least eight lives in the last year, has not found favour with the **West Midlands Regional Health Authority**, which refused to take on the running costs. A stay of execution was provided in June by donations from a Leeds-based hotel chain, but there is no money to cover the busiest months of August and September.

● IN **Chichester**, the follies of the new dental contract came to light when a centenarian's dentures went missing after a hip replacement.

The lady is now using a "foreign" pair to help her through the day at her nursing home. Unfortunately, the domiciliary visits required to fit a new set put the price above £200, and her dentist is obliged by the government to seek approval from the dental powers at Eastbourne before going ahead.

Since no extra staff have been taken on to cope with thousands of such approval requests and those who adjudicate are not practising dentists, this could take some time. If approval is refused, appeal to a tribunal could take more than a year and many such elderly patients will be sent to an edentulous grave.

● NO SUCH misery is likely to afflict Mrs Bottomley, who gets free NHS dental treatment from Professor F.P. Ashley of the department of periodontology and preventative dentistry at **Guys NHS Trust** flagship. Still, it's the least a former unmarried, teenage mum deserves...

M.D.

IMMIGRATION NEWS

ANYONE from an ethnic minority who wants to go fishing off the south coast should take a passport with them — or they may find themselves deported to Vietnam.

A Chinese family went fishing from the beach at Folkestone at the end of last month, and when they returned to shore found that a welcoming committee was waiting for them: the Kent police were there, and the lifeboat, coastguard and rescue helicopter from RAF Manston had all been alerted.

The party was quizzed at length by Knacker, who clearly feared that a wave of boat people wes about to land on this septic isle. Only when it was proven beyond all doubt that the family were from Woolwich and on a day trip to the seaside were they allowed to go home.

Sally Deedes

IN 1988 a Mr and Mrs Beckman suffered the usual hell experienced by those who find themselves living next to a house conversion.

Their own house developed ominous cracks, and after a year they put in a claim for damage to their insurance company, the Sun Alliance. After several months the claim for damages was settled and the company agreed to look into a claim for all the inconvenience they had suffered.

They heard no more for two and a half years, despite numerous calls. The company began to back track, saying compensation was not part of its policy and that it had only been agreed as a favour to the Beckmans. Since they had been assured that compensation would be forthcoming, the couple persisted.

Some three years after the original claim they received £1,000. Apparently the delay had been caused "by the other side". The fact that Sun Alliance had had the Beckman's address wrong for six months and that the "other side" was insured by an associate of Sun Alliance had nothing to do with it.

Unfortunately a waterpipe in the house on the other side of the Beckmans' home then developed a leak, waterlogging the whole side of the house. Once-white wallpaper turned green with bubbles to match. The couple went back to the Sun Alliance, but this time were told that no money would be paid out under their policy even though the company had paid up for similar damage two years earlier.

The Sun Alliance told the Beckmans that it should not have paid out, but added generously that it would not now ask them to refund the money. Since they now had a bill for £760 through no fault of their own, the couple approached their neighbour and the builder who had carried out the work.

The builder denied negligence and the neighbour took umbrage when presented with the bill. The neighbour did, however, put them in touch with his insurer who was, surprise surprise, the Sun Alliance. It accepted the claim for water damage in the house, but continued to refuse it to the Beckmans.

Last October Mr Beckman passed the matter to the insurance ombudsman, who accepted their claim 297 days after it had first been made. But this was not the end of the matter. Two reminders from Mr Beckman and a further complaint to the ombudsman were needed to get the cash out of the Sun Alliance, which paid the cheque in Mrs Beckman's name. To add insult to injury, the Beckmans had to take a marriage certificate to the building society for it to accept the cheque.

ROTTEN BOROUGHS

COVENTRY

AN INTERNAL report has revealed a catalogue of lies and cock-ups at Coventry Technical College just as the city's Labour leaders thought the college scandal was dying down.

Last year Coventry Tech went £5 million into the red after a series of ludicrous and grandiose schemes introduced by college principal John Temple failed. Rather than accept his college's minor status and Coventry's disreputable image, Temple touted the West Midlands city as a leading European academic centre which would soon be competing with Oxbridge and the Sorbonne for continental students.

Temple set up costly branches in Brussels and Athèns which attracted many junketing councillors but very few students.

The report by council chief executive Iain Roxborough accuses managers of being obsessed with delusions of grandeur, lying to governors about the European plans and creating a climate of fear in which staff dared not speak out. According to Roxborough, Temple's former management team were "adept at the exploitation of power to the point of thinking that it was a law unto itself."

Among the disasters Roxborough found that:

- Although governors were asked to approve plans to set up a full-time Brussels outlet, partly funded by the college, the Belgian office was already up and running and the college had paid £30,000 for it.
- Managers had told governors that the Athens branch would attract 100 overseas students yet only eight turned up, a fact managers failed to relay to governors.
- A similar venture in Hong Kong netted five oriental students.
- Managers lied to governors about overseas student numbers at the college. They claimed there were 200 when only 75 overseas students had arrived.
- None of the foreign ventures had been costed, nor were any business plans prepared.

Interestingly, a file which had warned of impending financial doom for the college before the scandal broke was mysteriously lost soon after arriving at the town hall. By coincidence it turned up three years later — on the morning the chief executive's report was published!

"Oh, no... Allergy in a Country Churchyard"

BIRMINGHAM

THE MEDIA empire built by Birmingham city council's socialist would-be press barons is set to crash about their ears — thanks to a report by bloated "media consultant" Vincent Hanna.

Hanna was called in by Labour leader Sir "Dick" Knowles after the departure of the city's media boss, "Atomic" Lynda Longbottom (*Eyes passim*). But the Labour leadership's hopes of a whitewash have been dashed by one of the most scathing reports ever published in local government.

Hanna earned his £800-a-day with 60 pages of vituperation — much of it directed at Atomic Lynda — accusing her of lacking leadership, lacking experience and ability and accusing her of being "out of her depth". He said of her department: "One would be hard-pressed to find an area where the citizens of Birmingham get less value for money."

In a scathing note of "sympathy" he adds: "It is possible to have some sympathy. She had been catapulted from a relatively minor and limited job into the hottest PR seat in local government."

Tactfully the report does not deal with how she landed in that seat. Longbottom used to work for the British Nuclear Forum (not British Nuclear Fuels Ltd as we stated earlier), although BNFL is one of the forum's biggest members. She also worked for a variety of other major clients — mostly in freelance or temporary capacities. Put together on a CV the names made an impressive enough list to get her an interview.

Longbottom was not dishonest in her application, nor her interview; but the councillors and officers who met and interviewed her convinced themselves she was a top-flight first division PR person. The result, as Hanna describes it, is the current fiasco — a major public relations disaster from which the city will take years to discover. Hanna recommends the dismantling of the £2.5 million-a-year PR department and the loss of up to 20 of its 50 staff.

BENT

DRESSING-up games are now the order of the day in Bent, where the ruling Tories' attempts to make London's rottenest borough a flagship of Majorite municipal efficiency are faltering badly.

Although all council departments are now geared to make a profit, the books are not balancing in the borough's libraries' where councillors recently spent £6,000 on uniforms for 200 librarians.

Someone at Bent town hall failed to do their homework properly, for no sooner had the 200 costumes been bought than 80 librarians were made redundant!

Critics of the £6,000 fiasco want the council to buy books instead (none having been purchased since September 1990) but the council has no plans to do so until autumn 1993, and is instead concentrating its efforts on moving the borough archive to Cricklewood from its home in Neasden.

However, it comes as no surprise that Coun Peter "Potty" Golds, the Tory chairman of arts and leisure, wants the librarians to dress up. Golds, now a lobbyist for the Chemical Industries Association, is no stranger to dressing up himself and is well remembered for some of his outrageous outfits in Hampstead where he worked as Tory party agent.

As an extra during one of the Westminster Players' productions at Churchill Hall, part of the Hampstead Tories' headquarters, he not only played the lord mayor of Manchester complete with authentic Willesden (a defunct London borough now part of Bent) Alderman's regalia, but in another scene donned a flowing frock and curly green wig for reasons no one remembers.

His enthusiasm for this latter outfit was so great that he was later spotted wearing it at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, where he was not part of the production of *Sweeney Todd*.

On another occasion he borrowed a complete woman's outfit from Anthony Earl-Williams, otherwise known as the spanking Countess (see *Eyes passim*) who at the time was the Tories' long-standing ward chairman in South End Green, which takes in most of Hampstead Heath.

Letters

Gay Carlton club

Sir,

Thank you for your helpful article (EYE *799) confirming that I have been the victim of a poison pen letter campaign. Could I however just add a couple of useful points. Documents at Companies House currently only show the picture up to December 1990; within the next few weeks, Noel Gay Television's annual accounts to the year ending December '91 will be lodged in keeping with their normal annual practice and they will reveal two significant facts.*

Firstly, that 1990 was an unusually high earning year for the company (a direct result of its contract with BSB) but that level of earnings was not repeated in '91 and secondly, that I resigned my directorship of both Noel Gay and Grant Naylor on 5 November '91 — three weeks after Carlton was awarded the London weekday licence and my appointment as director of programmes was confirmed.

For the record, Grant Naylor Productions has not received any network commissions to date, either from Carlton or, to my knowledge, from any other ITV companies.

Yours faithfully,
PAUL JACKSON,

Carlton Television, London WC2.

Sir,

With reference to your story on Carlton and Paul Jackson I'd like to point out that:

(a) I am NOT *a Carlton Television executive, but CEO of Zenith Productions, an independent production company in which Carlton Communications has a 51 percent interest.*

(b) I have never been in a position to offer production commissions to Noel Gay (or any company) on behalf of Carlton Television.

(c) I did propose DEVELOPMENT *commissions on behalf of Carlton Television to a number of production companies and individuals in the early stage of the franchise application process.*

Yours sincerely,
CHARLES DENTON,

Zenith Productions Ltd, London W1.

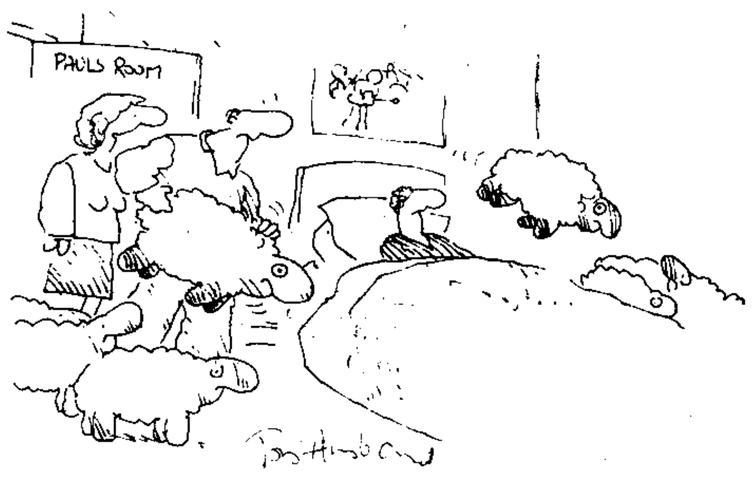
Sir,

I was interested to read your comments about Paul Jackson of Carlton Television, Noel Gay TV et al.

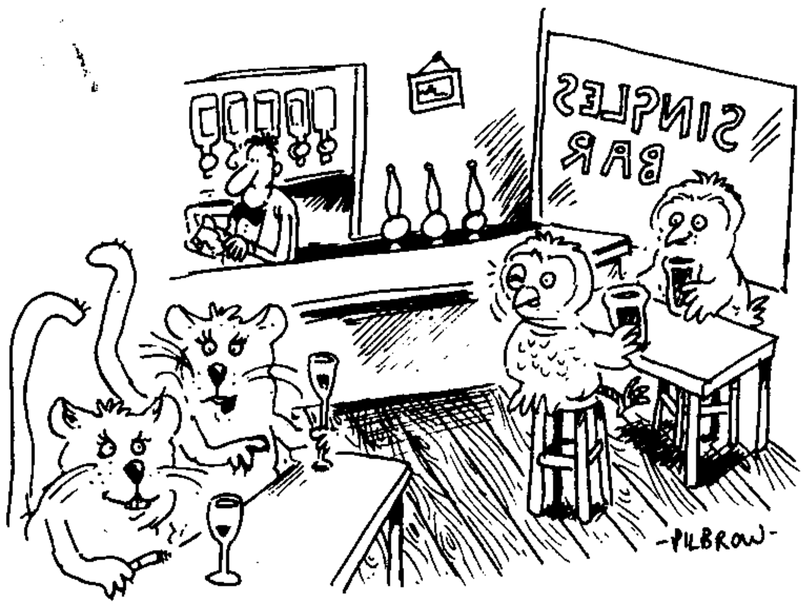
I attended an ACTT writers' section meeting on Tuesday 16 May 1989 where Mr Jackson, among others, addressed the membership on the presentation of ideas to the TV companies. When asked if it was a coincidence that a recent Noel Gay Television programme had been shown on BBC TV and that one of his co-directors was the newly-retired head of BBC TV, Bill Cotton, he told the assembled company that such an arrangement was "a two-edged sword". Really?

Yours sincerely,
NAME AND ADDRESS
SUPPLIED,

London.



"Bill, he'll go to sleep when he's ready"



"That guy over there keeps winking at me"

It's that tram again

Sir,

Yes, it was unfortunate that Brenda was not able to ride on Metrolink, since it is undoubtedly the finest public transport system in Britain. Since I'm sure she is an avid consumer of your organ, I would like her to know that:

1. Only Cyril Smith could have found the seats uncomfortable.

2. A timetable is slightly redundant when the trams are only five minutes apart.

3. The ticket machines could be operated by any higher order primate which admittedly may exclude some Mancunian EYE *correspondents.*

4. Ticket collectors are not required because of the legendary Mancunian honesty.

The whole point, which eluded your egregious writer, is that the system will be extended using DISUSED *BR routes in the next few years. Building much of the first phase on existing track was the quickest and cheapest way to establish a viable network. Since most politicians can only see as far as the next election, I am amazed that any council in Britain had the insight to make such an investment in infrastructure. I expect to see future junkets to Manchester by Conservative politicians to find out how it was done.*

Yours,
IAN CLARKE,

Wilmslow, Cheshire.

Metro gnome

Sir,

Surely the paranoid ramblings of your anti-Manchester Metrolink correspondent are those of a transport planner whose plan was rejected in favour of Metrolink and who never got to go to any of the Euro piss-ups preceding its inauguration.

I think we should be told.

JIM CORDELL,

Manchester.

Last health resort

Sir,

*As Lord Gnome can testify, I was not the author of the piece on specialist medical training and accreditation in Doing the Rounds (*EYE *798), as suggested so sneeringly by A.M.K. Rickwood MA, FRCS (*EYE *799).*

Maybe Doing the Rounds has drawn on some of the stories I have written on the subject in the INDEPENDENT *over the past six months. If these are simply the "ravings" of a "consultant basher", perhaps Mr Rickwood can explain why the Government has finally conceded the "unlawful and discriminatory" mess that UK specialist medical training and accreditation has become?*

As the department of health told representatives of the GMC, the BMA and the medical royal colleges at a meeting on 22 June "real changes are needed — preserving the status quo or making minor presentational changes to current systems are not options." I'm sure Mr Rickwood's trade union or "professional body" will supply him with chapter and verse.

For "accredited" read "discredited".

Yours faithfully,
JUDY JONES,

The Independent, London EC1.

Euro-cleansing

Sir,

It is time that you pensioned off your Brussels correspondent who is quite clearly well past his [or her] sell by date. How anyone can write an article about the stalled European Environment Agency without mentioning the French is beyond comprehension.

The council of ministers actually decided months ago that the new agency would go to Copenhagen. However, those good Europeans, the French, in true Gaullist tradition have decided to blackmail the other 11 member states by refusing to agree to the siting of the environment agency unless they get agreement to the European parliament residing permanently in Strasbourg.

Your correspondent does not only not know what is going on, he [or she] appears to have promoted Ken Collins to the new and prestigious post of president of the European environment commission. This will come as a surprise to at least three people.

The European environment commissioner is that nice Mr Van Miert, who took over from Mr Ripa de Meana (aka the Grim Reaper). The president of the European environment council is currently our very own Michael Howard. Ironically, it is now the job of Mr Howard to inquire of Mr Reapa de Meana, who is now the Italian environment minister, why the Italian government has been so dilatory in implementing EC environment directives.

Sadly, Ken Collins is only the chairman of the environment committee of the European parliament, a body with about as much power and influence as the average parish council.

Yours sincerely,
D. TAYLOR,

Brixham, Devon.

Lookalike

Rameses **Chingford**

Sir,

I wonder if any of your readers have noticed the remarkable resemblance between Rameses II and the Marquess of Chingford.

Are they, by any chance, related? I think Dale Campbell-Savours should be told.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN HODGE,

London W13.

Boy's own comics

Sir,

From the "crusader" with a droopy weapon on your front cover to the jibe about Mellor on page 30, EYE *799 is full of pictorial insults against the male of our species. In no fewer than 22 cartoons and illustrations, men are portrayed as stupid, greedy, sex-crazed and hypocritical. In the same issue, there are barely half a dozen pictorial insults against women.*

I am sure that some men will feel very temperamentally challenged with you with regard to this one.

Yours faithfully,
NICHOLAS WHITEHEAD,

Knighton, Powys.

That's enough torture

Sir,

*Nooks & Corners (*EYE *799) had a significant number of errors in its article about the Royal Armouries.*

For the record. The move of part of the Royal Armouries collection to Leeds will NOT *prevent access by scholars. On the contrary, the new museum will give better access to the reserve collections as well as providing improved research facilities, and Leeds has excellent road, rail and air links.*

We do NOT *propose to develop a theme park. Our aim is to have more of our collection on public view, to have it displayed and interpreted to the highest standards, and to increase the public's enjoyment and understanding of arms and armour.*

We shall NOT *be leaving the Tower of London, the historic home of the Royal Armouries. The displays in the White Tower will be rearranged to tell the story both of the Armouries and the Tower.*

We have recently redisplayed the instruments of torture and punishment which are one of the Armouries' historic collections, but we have NOT *recently purchased any additional torture implements.*

Finally, I refute absolutely the suggestion that we propose to trivialise England's past. In fact, our intention is to give many more of the people of this country the opportunity to appreciate the important part of the nation's heritage which is in our care.

Yours faithfully,
G.M. WILSON,

Tower of London, EC3.

Field work

Sir,

*How ironic that Old Muckspreader criticises the CPRE for not allowing farmers to build new roads and houses wherever they wish (*EYE *799) while on the same page Old Macdonald has a go at the developers of houses and golf courses.*

Surely the Council for the Preservation of Rural England has no other choice — if you build all over the countryside it isn't rural any more, is it?

Yours faithfully,
JOHN WOLSTENHOLME,

Sheffield.

Complaint lodged

Sir,

*Could I respectfully suggest to Rachel Godfrey (*EYE *799 — Massive indignation) that if she had whatever is lodged up her backside removed, life would probably be more comfortable.*

Yours without indignation,
ERIC TWANG,

Oman.

PS: Where's M Haque gone? I know he wasn't real, but he was bloody funny all the same.

I-SPY *Inca, Majorca*

Submitted by Gordon E. Leek. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Stone crazy

Sir,

I was surprised to see the EYE *attacking Edinburgh council for the idea of cobbling a bridge. This seems a very practical and visually pleasing way to achieve "traffic calming". I have long been meaning to suggest this idea to car-mad planners of Brum, who have a wealth of backstreets whose original cobbles are now showing through crude tarmac.*

I was even more surprised that the EYE *concerns itself more with the effect these cobbles would have on car suspensions and increased traffic speed, than with people and safety.*

Yours sincerely,
COLIN TROTH,

Birmingham.

Elle hath no fury...

Sir,

I address this letter to the female (just) journalist who made a pathetic attempt to embarrass Angela Palmer by leaking an item about ELLE.

When you look into the mirror tonight you know that she is more intelligent than you, more talented than you and therefore will always be more successful than you. You know that she has a more charming and better-looking husband than you could ever have — that her children will be prolific heart-breakers yours could never hope to be.

Look closer — look at the imperfections of your puffy, greasy face, your mean little mouth and pig's eyes. No one knows better than you that she would turn more heads at a gathering of blind gay monks than you would if you paraded in a "La Perla" bikini in front of the entire US Marine Corps.

You are a miserable loser, slowly being devoured by the cancer of jealousy. She is a goddess whose paperclips you are not fit to polish.

Her career will become ever more dazzling and she will be besieged by admirers. Your so-called career will slide into lonely and frustrated oblivion. You will finish in a tiny room smelling of stale cooking with only a cat and a warm bottle of cheap vodka between you and despair.

THE INCA,

London.

Abominable toe man

Those Mellor Anagrams

DIM LOVER LAD
D.M. LAID LOVER
OLD DEVIL RAM
MOLL DID RAVE!

ALAN WIGHTMAN

Newport, Gwent.

Sir,

Have you noticed that David Mellor is an anagram of DILDO MARVEL?

Yours crudely,
LAURA HARMAN,

London NW10.

(That's enough Anagrams — Ed.)

Olympicballs

£10 paid for contributions

"For the last two seasons she has been running on painkillers — her foot is quite sore."

DAVID COLEMAN, BBC1
(A.J. Boyle)

"There he is, the fastest man in the world this year... other men may have run faster this year but he did it when it mattered."

DAVID COLEMAN, BBC1
(John Parkes)

"... and if Berger gets another yellow flag it will be a red one."

DAVID COLEMAN, BBC1
(Tony Lyons)

"After the initial rush for places, they're settling down now to sensibility."

DAVID COLEMAN, BBC1
(Andrew Lister)

"Indeed, they've put a blanket round the entire city."

DAVID COLEMAN, BBC1
(Gerald Porter)

"There's a mistake on the scoreboard: they're only showing his Christian names, Ismail Ibrahim."

DAVID COLEMAN, BBC2
(R.W. Freeman)

"Burrell is clinically blind in his right eye... Christie is on his left side. He'll have Christie in full vision."

DAVID COLEMAN, BBC1
(Paul Cardin)

"... and Tulu... looking a lot more experienced, although she's not showing it tonight."

DAVID COLEMAN, BBC1
(Steve Issitt)

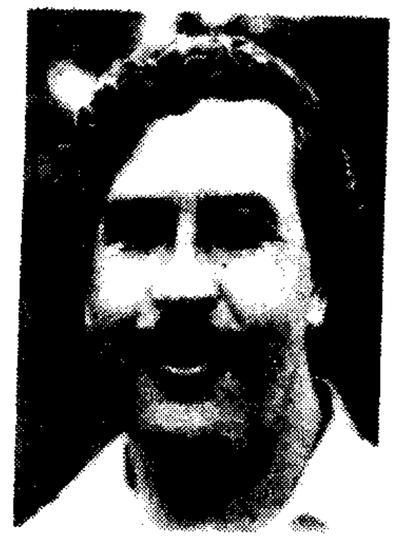
"And there is Linford Christie on the warm up track outside — well, in his case he'll be warming down because the final does not start for around 75 minutes."

DAVID COLEMAN, BBC1
(G. George)

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN

Letter from
Medellin



from Our Own Correspondent

MANY of the journalists shown around the Envigado prison from which Pablo Escobar escaped last month had a strong sense of dèja vu. Gold-plated taps, luxury soft furnishings, huge jacuzzis and marble bars — the place was a model of the former downtown Medellin home of the world's most wanted criminal.

As one wag remarked, the only thing the world's biggest coke smuggler seemed to have foregone in confinement were the hefty monthly bills for his personal security. With four faxes, eight phone lines, the complete freedom to interrogate minions dragged in from outside, why not do business at the government's expense?

Having made a personal inspection, the former justice minister Jaime Giraldo expressed himself shocked at the opulence of Escobar's personal quarters. He must be the only Colombian who was. Club Medellin, as it was always known, was designed to Escobar's own specifications — right down to the natural waterfall for showering after workouts in the gym or on the football pitch. His guards and the prison governor, paid up to five times their state salaries, were soon proving that you *can* get the staff these days — if you've got the money.

Ironically, the real reason for Escobar's escape was probably the belief that El Padrino was losing touch from behind the barbed wire and minefields that protected rather than imprisoned him. For a jumped-up mugger who started his criminal career shaving down stolen gravestones for sale to the relatives of his earliest victims, gossip from the streets is essential.

In recent months, lesser coke dealers had started to refuse to pay their "taxes." Others seemed to be getting strange ideas about following in the footsteps of "el capo". And while the Medellin cartel remains the centre of the trade, not even Escobar would deny that the rival Cali group has boosted its market share during what one of his accountants euphemistically described as the "difficulties" of the last two years.

The "difficulties" are now likely to be the government's. Its credibility already in tatters — it has been revealed that Escobar and nine henchmen simply walked out of Envigado when paratroop reinforcements arrived eight hours late — everyone here is bracing themselves for another round in the drug war. Massive car bombs, political assassinations and police claims of miraculous escapes by Escobar in his underpants will be the order of the day if the past is anything to go by.

Feigning concern, El Padrino has sent none-too-reassuring messages to the media, reassuring us that there will be no violence "for the time being". As befits the world's most important commodity broker, he wants a deal. Politically, any kind of negotiation may be impossible for the government given how ridiculous it has been made to look by the last accord with Escobar. If you control an annual income several dozen times larger than the national defence budget, run a virtual alternative government and are as addicted to power as your customers are to your product, your potential for violence is, as John Major might say, "not inconsiderable".

That is something the generals now leading the hunt for Escobar know all too well. Talking strategy in a barracks last week, one Medellin colonel insisted he had a personal score to settle with Escobar — the dozens of policemen gunned down in his 17-year criminal career. As he dealt with the dispatch of the SAS-trained Elite force to the jungles north-east of Medellin, details of the first car bombs came through on the telex. It was followed by news of Colombia's first athletics medal at the Olympics. Had Colombia ever won medals before? the colonel was asked. "Only in shooting, I think," came the deadpan reply.

TRUE STORIES

CHRISTOPHER LOGUE

Illuminated by BERT KITCHEN

IN the course of his evidence, Sergeant James Hardy said: "Told of an indecent act taking place on a public vehicle, I drove to the Northam Estate and arrested Mr Harold Granger, who was making love to Edith Zee on the floor of a 27A, Shipham to Sloe Corner, bus. Mr Granger explained that he was the driver of the bus and, as his own car was in for a service and as he always had sex on a Thursday evening, he had picked up Mrs Zee after work on his way back to the garage."

"*WHEN my husband announced that he was undertaking a charity walk from Land's End to John O'Groats on behalf of the Disabled Youth of Cheltenham, I was quite relieved as I have a lot to do around the house," said Mrs Jason Wheel. "However, as Jason took the first stride of his 1,000-mile match he fell over the starting sign he had painted on orders from his friend Harry Tate, a press photographer, and broke his leg. Perhaps it is just as well. On a previous walk he got sunstroke and was in hospital for five days."*

ASKED by Judge Antonio Carraci why he decided to divorce his wife after 25 years of marriage, Mr Guiseppe Marra said: "Each night, for a quarter of a century, just as I was drifting off to sleep, Maria would shout 'Earthquake!' at the top of her voice."

MR Yeniat Koseoglu, the mayor of Urian, near Izmir, has given the freedom of the town to Mr Taskin Adas, a passer-by.

"Fire was spreading towards the local munitions dump in which 4.5 tonnes of dynamite are stored," said Mr Koseoglu. "But the local firemen were afraid to intervene. Whereupon Mr Adas took a Kalashnikov out of his rucksack and forced them to extinguish the flames at gunpoint. Asked by the local police where he had got the weapon, Mr Adas said his mother had left it to him in her will.

INTERVIEWED outside All Hallows Hospital, Auckland, Mr John Cotton and Mr William Crow agreed that they had been hired to catch an emu which had developed a habit of rushing out of the bushes surrounding the 12th hole of the Howard golf course and seizing, then swallowing, the ball that was about to be struck. "We dressed as golfers and baited the tee with a new, well-positioned ball. When the emu dashed out we dived for it and, unluckily, struck our heads together, leaving the bird to escape with the ball."

ASKED why he had thrown a slab of concrete through the window of a passing bus, Kevin Abel, 16, said: "I wanted to throw a snowball, but it was all too soft."

IINFORMATION: Bournemouth Evening Echo 25.6.92; Western Daily Press 26.6.92; Athens News 29.6.92; Turkish Daily News 18.6.92; Courier Mail 26.5.92; Scotsman 26.6.92; Maldon Evening News 25.6.92. MONITORS: Nigel Cox, Richard Hope-Hawkins, T. Hopkins, Stewart Leask, Norman Reynolds, Alison J. Wilde.

The marital breakdown that leaves us all stunned

by Lady Antonia Holden-Guest

FOR months it has been coming. The tabloid tittle-tattle has told us how they had separate bedrooms, how they hardly ever went out together, how he had not seen his children for seven months.

But many of us close to Mick and Jerry could not really believe that the fairytale romance of the 80s, that had caught the imagination of the whole world, was really at an end.

We knew that they were in some ways an ill-matched couple. He, middle-aged, balding, balding, fond of cricket and exotic substances. She, the vivacious, long-legged beauty who won hearts wherever she went, with her warm smile and her trend-setting wardrobe.

But, as the years went by, it seemed Mick and Jerry had found a formula to make theirs a marriage for the '90s.

OK — so he liked to go off with other women. Who doesn't, in these days, when even the Minister of Fun has his bit on the side and no questions asked?

As for Jerry, she built up an even larger following through her selfless work for many charities and her sensational legs *(surely 'compassion for the less fortunate'? W.D.)*.

Yet today the fairytale is over. The dreams of a whole generation are shattered. The romance which bloomed into the Wedding of the Century lies broken into a million fragments, like some precious Ming vase.

How, oh how, one asks, can young people be expected to revere the institution of holy matrimony when even their most cherished idols are seen to be discarding their marriage vows as casually as yesterday's copy of the *Daily Hellograph*.

NEXT WEEK: "Why I Can't Get No Satisfaction Out Of Marriage" by Hitler Hastings and Conrad Black.

DIVORCE SOUVENIR

How they are not related any more

Tom

Sir Mickwell de Jaeger

Sir Norman "Rolling" Stone

Sir Rolling Rat

E-Type Jagger

Jaegers of Regent Street

Mick Jogger

Michael Jackson

Jerry

The Yellow Rose of Texas

H. Rose Perot

Buffalo Bill Wyman

Annie Get Your Gun

Annie Hall

Jerry Lewis

Jerry Worsthorne

THE LIBEL CASE OF THE CENTURY

The case of Jani Allan v. Channel 4. Day 94

The case continued today before Mr Justice Potty in which the journalist Ms Jani Allan is accused of becoming infatuated with the notorious Pieter Carterre-Fuck of the AWB (Avaricious Writ Brigade), who planned to make millions of pounds bringing libel actions against everyone in the country.

Mr George Carman QC cross-examined Ms Jani Slagg for the eighth day running.

CARBOOT: I ask you to look at your diary entry for the 4th June. What do you see there, Ms Slagg? The words "Saw CR. He's fantastic. The Best."

MS SLAGG: You are quoting me out of context.

CARPHONE *(turns to audience):* We are all, are we not Ms Slagg, out of context.

(Court rocks with laughter at Carphone's legendary wit)

CARBOOT: Now will you look at the following entry: "This afternoon he showed me his affidavit. I had never seen such a long one. And it was all tied up with a lovely pink ribbon."

SLAGG: That diary is a complete fantasy. I made it up. I never went to see Carterre-Blanche. I hated him. He was very unattractive and far too old for me.

CARPHONE: I am a mere 62. Perhaps, Ms Slagg, you would like to put my phone number in your diary?

(Court has hysterics. Journalists scribble down bon-mot ready for profile of "World's Richest Barrister: They Call Him The Juicy QC")

Earlier the court heard a fellow solicitor Mr Montagu Snooper describe how he had seen Ms Smut enter Mr Carterre-Fuck's room and how he had heard strange noises coming from within. He had then looked through the keyhole.

CARPHONE: Will you tell the court what you then saw, did you not?

SIR CHARLES GREY *(for the plaintiff):* M'Lud. I object on the grounds that I am plainly losing this case.

JUSTICE POTTYTRAINED: Objection overruled. Pray continue, Mr Carpark. This is the bit we're all waiting for.

SNOOPER: I saw a huge pile of green money going up and down on a scale. They were both laughing and she said: "Give it to me! Give it to me! I want it all." Then he said: "You won't regret this. I can keep it up for three weeks, and then — bingo!"

GREYMAN: I object, Your Honour. The witness could not possibly have seen what he claims. I have here a lifesize replica keyhole of Mr Carterre-Blanche's office.

(Produces keyhole theatrically)

POTTY: This is most improper and not nearly as good as Mr Carperson's jokes.

GREYMAN: It is absolutely vital to our case. The witness claims he could identify Mr Terrefuck's pin-striped underpants bulging with money. But, as the jury will now witness, you cannot see anything through this keyhole because I have blocked it up.

The court then heard written submissions from Mr Carterre-Fuck himself, claiming that he had never had an improper relationship with Ms Slagg nor had he egged her on in any way except to suggest that if she sued Channel 4 they could both clean up.

The judge, Mr Justice Pooter, then gave his summing up.

POTSHOT: We've all read a lot about thus case in the *Telegraph* and I hope you've all enjoyed it as much as I have. We are all very sorry it has come to an end but it is my duty to suggest to you that it is time Mr Carterre-Fuck was taught a lesson. I therefore instruct you to retire and find him guilty.

The jury returned after 30 seconds to find against the plaintiffs, Slagg and Fuck, and to find Mr Michael Grade (producer of Channel 4's *The Lawyer, The Loony, The Nazi and the Cheque for £300,000*) extremely happy.

TOP TEN BORES

This Week		Last Week	Weeks On List
1	Michael Jackson	10	580
2	Percy Bysshe Shelley	–	–
3	David Vine	7	374
4	Sir Norman Fowler	6	43
5=	George Carman QC	5	4
5=	Charles Gray QC	5	4
7	The Labour Shadow Cabinet	–	–
8	Anthony Holden	4	789
9	Simon Jenkins	9	27
10	Bunny	–	–

This wee's Bores compiled with the help of The Reader's Digest ("Where good writing comes first")

MAJOR'S DAY OF DECISION

by Our political staff **Nanette Newage**

AFTER weeks of vacillation, television pictures have at last stung John Major into action.

Although the government was well aware of the appalling situation from its own intelligence sources (*Daily Telegraph*), it was only when footage of the camps was shown on nationwide television that it was finally forced to act.

Viewers saw pictures of gaunt, half-naked figures wandering aimlessly about in the camps while uniformed policemen turned a blind eye and social workers handed out meagre bundles of ten-pound notes, scarcely enough to sustain the inmates for an hour in the local pub.

Major Dope Shock

Even the Prime Minister was forced to concede that the situation had become intolerable and that he would have to intervene in order to restore his popularity *(shurely 'law and order'? Ed)*.

Even though many of his advisers (D. Hurd) warned against intervention, Mr Major has taken a risk by issuing his toughest statement to date. He has ordered immediate sanctions on all dole payments to the travellers to take immediate effect from this morning.

LATE NEWS

Major popularity soars p2

"Travellers: string 'em up," says Fleet Street's top cabbie, Paul Johnson p3

"I agree," says everyone else pp5,7,9,10,11

THE SUN

HOW THE PAKIS CHEATED

by Mickey Mouse, England's Team Manager

YES! The Pakis cheated. That was the only explanation for England's shock defeat in the last Test.

As England team manager, I was in a unique position to see for myself the disgraceful below-the-belt tactics employed by the Pakistani bowlers, Wassim Howzat, Wakki Yurout and Yosser Mustache *(Who they? Ed)*.

I can reveal the Pakis deliberately bowled:

- **Really fast**
- **At the stumps**
- **Spinning it as well.**

The result was that the batsman could not see the ball, let alone hit it, and was thus put in an impossible position. I say these cheats should be strung up and sent home.

© M. Mouse, SunTrash.

TEST MATCH SCORE IN FULL

1st Innings

Pakistan 798-0 declared
(Mianmigirl 700 n.o.)

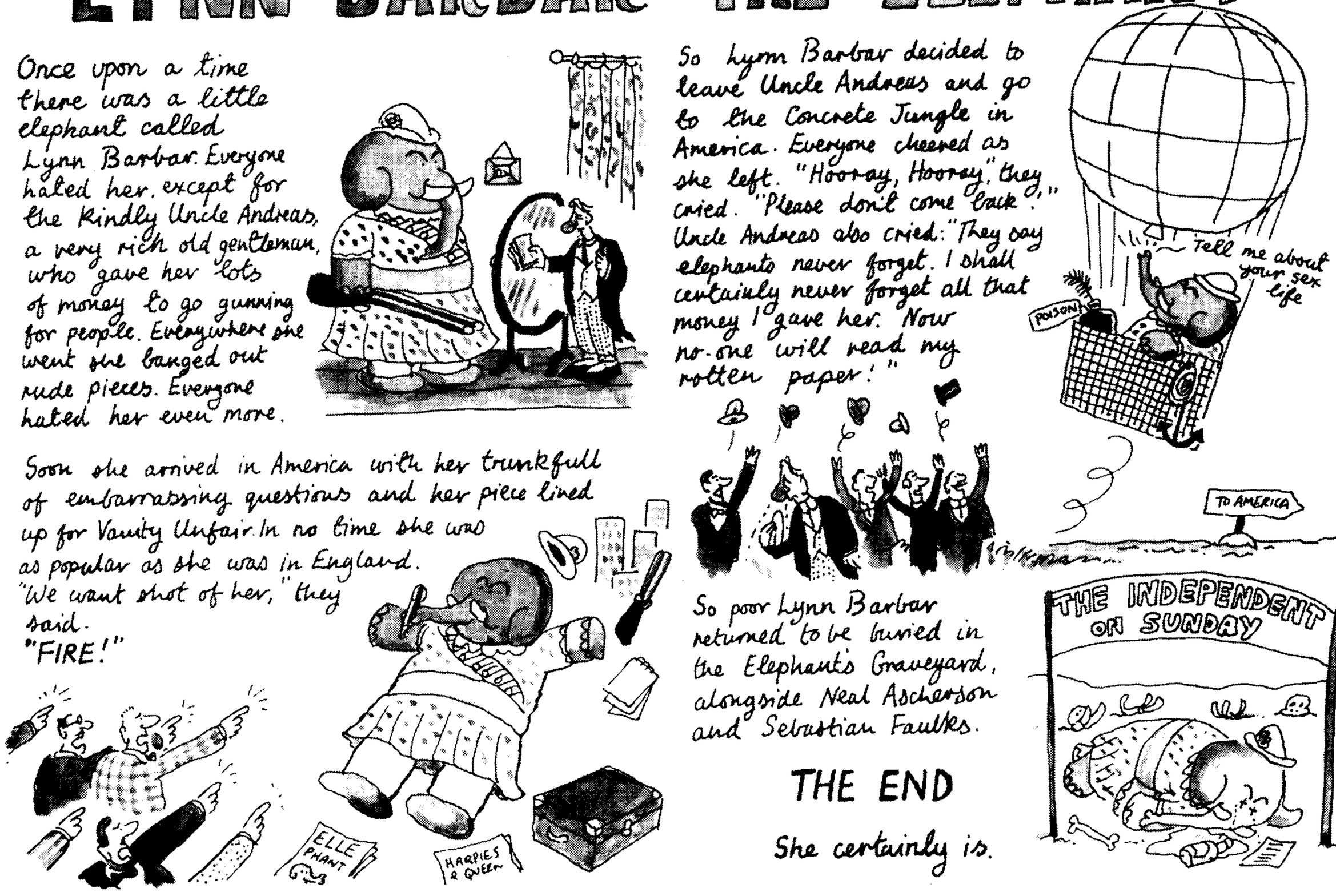
England 13 All Out
(Yosser 10 for 1)

2nd Innings

England 0 All Out
(Yurout 10 for 0)

Pakistan won by Innings and 785 runs

The Story of LYNN BARBAR THE ELEPHANT


Once upon a time there was a little elephant called Lynn Barbar. Everyone hated her, except for the Kindly Uncle Andreas, a very rich old gentleman, who gave her lots of money to go gunning for people. Everywhere she went she banged out rude pieces. Everyone hated her even more.
So Lynn Barbar decided to leave Uncle Andreas and go to the Concrete Jungle in America. Everyone cheered as she left. "Hooray, Hooray," they cried. "Please don't come back." Uncle Andreas also cried: "They say elephants never forget. I shall certainly never forget all that money I gave her. Now no-one will read my rotten paper!"
Tell me about your sex life
POISON
TO AMERICA
Soon she arrived in America with her trunkfull of embarrassing questions and her piece lined up for Vanity Unfair. In no time she was as popular as she was in England. "We want shot of her," they said. "FIRE!"
ELLE PHANT
HARPIES & QUEEN
So poor Lynn Barbar returned to be buried in the Elephant's Graveyard, alongside Neal Ascherson and Sebastian Faulks.
THE INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY
THE END
She certainly is.

The Secret DIARY OF JOHN MAJOR aged 47¾

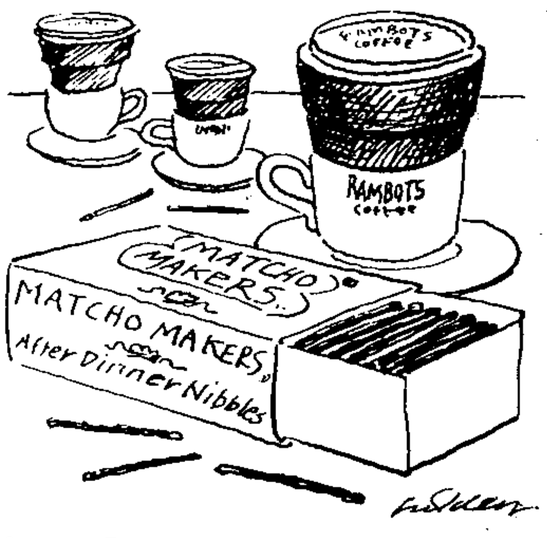
Friday

I was very excited today to be invited to a secret dinner by none other than Mr Andrew Neill, the famous newspaper editor! My wife Norman has long been a great fan of his early-morning "phone-in" programmes and she says that he has a much better grasp of politics than some people she could mention! When I went next door to tell Norma Lamont about the sort of invitations I get nowadays, he burst into tears and said that Mr Neill was making his life an absolute misery, by repeating week after week that the recession wasn't over. "But surely he's right," I said. "Yes," said Norma, "but he doesn't have to keep reminding people."

Saturday

When I arrived at Mr Neill's flat it was very swanky indeed, with pink wallpaper, zebra-skin sofas and mirrors everywhere! His wife was a very pretty blonde lady in a not inconsiderably short skirt, who sat on his knee and called him "Big Boy". There were also some very important journalists from the *Sunday Times*, who are very clever and understand all Mr Neill's jokes!

When Mrs Neill brought round



the mints during our coffee, they asked me if I had anything to say to them. "Oh yes," I said, "my friend Mr Lamont is getting in no small measure upset about the rude things you have been saying about the economy." Everyone stopped laughing and looked quite embarrassed.

"What are you suggesting?" said Mr Neill, in his funny Scottish accent, "That the editor of a major national newspaper should suppress the truth in order to ingratiate himself with the government of the day and thereby earn himself some worthless bauble such as a knighthood?"

"Yes," I replied, glad that he had taken my point so quickly. "OK," he said, "it's a deal."

Sunday

I got up very early this morning to get my copy of the *Sunday Times*, as Norman likes the "Style" section very much. I was delighted to see a very large headline on the front page reading "Lamont's Firm Handling Of Economy Wins Widespread Support". Inside there was a special article signed by the editor entitled "Give Lamont A Chance — Why The Moaning Minnies Should Shut Up". There was also a very big picture of me taken at the Huntingdon Conservative Car Boot Fête. The caption read: "What a sweetie! Britain's greatest PM since Thatcher guesses how many Smarties there are in the jar". This is terrific news, and shows that the recession is nearly over, now that we now have such strong support in the media.

(I guessed there were 706 Smarties in the jar, but in fact there were 307,006 — so I was quite near!)

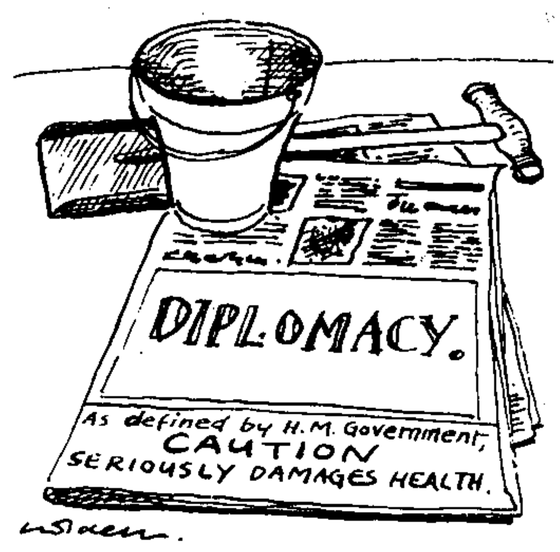
Monday

There seems to be an awful lot about this place called Bosnia on the television news. Oddly enough I cannot find this country on my *Daily Telegraph* World Leader Wall Map. Perhaps it is in the Soviet Union, which is now known as the Unified Team. (You have to watch the Olympics to keep up with politics nowadays, oh yes!) Mr Hurd told me not to worry, as no one is interested in Bosnia, especially not when Britain has just won another gold medal! I am sure he is right, as per usual.

Tuesday

I was not inconsiderably irritated to see in all the papers this morning such headlines as "Stop Bosnian Slaughter — Major Must Act" and "Maggie Slams Do-Nothing Major". I rang up Mr Hurd to ask whether he still thought nobody was interested in Bosnia. "Of course not," he said, in his toffee-nosed accent, "we're all going on holiday."

"But shouldn't I do something?" I asked him, in my sternest Foreign Affairs voice. "Certainly,



prime minister," he said. "You should go on holiday as well."

Wednesday

Norman has booked our tickets for our Spanish holiday. We are going to a completely unspoiled village called El Dorado. Apparently it is not very popular, so we shall have the beach to ourselves. Norman has packed my grey Bermuda shorts and a bottle of Amber Gris Suntan Lotion, and also the proof copy of my friend Jeffrey Archer's latest novel. This is very topical, as it is about a huge economic crisis in Britain which becomes so bad that the Chancellor of the Exchequer Norris Lapont is sacked. The prime minister James Colonel is at his wits end, and begs his old friend Godfrey Bowman, who is now Lord Bowman, to join the Cabinet and save the day. I am really looking forward to it!

Thursday

There are some last-minute details to attend to before going off on my holiday. Mr Heseltine came to me with what he thinks is a tricky problem over his new Council Tax. "John," he said. "This tax is based on house values. But nobody's house is worth anything any more, so we won't raise any money."

I immediately thought of the answer: "Tax the houses at the rate they were when they were worth lots of money." Mr Heseltine looked amazed and told me my idea was incredible.

It all goes to prove that an Oxford education isn't everything.

Friday

I believe that the woman I do not mention is trying to start a war in Yugoslavia. Will she never learn that this is Mr Bush's job? Her job is to keep quiet and support the Government while we endeavour to obtain full possession of the facts which she has obviously not got because she is no longer in power, which I am, oh yes — or Oh Lay, as they say in Spain.

THE CLARK DIARIES

EXCLUSIVE to *Private Eye* — the secret diaries of Alan Clark, the wittiest politician since Julian Critchley. As one of the senior members of the Thatcher Government through the '80s (Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Arms Deals), Lord Clark was in a unique position to see the workings of power at first hand. His unique insights and acerbic comments on the leading personalities of the day will be serialised exclusively in *Private Eye*, beginning next week.

Here are just a few of Clark's scintillating thumbnail sketches that have earned him the sobriquet of "the Mr Pepys de nos jours".

Tom King *— "a complete charlatan with a silly voice and ridiculous spectacles — he has never done an honest day's work in his life".*

The Queen *— "a jumped-up little middle-class parvenu. Why do we pay her all this money when she has got so much of her own?"*

Tom King *— "a frightful little creep, with those ghastly glasses. How I hate him."*

Prince Charles *— "what an insufferable little middle-class prig he is! How dare he lecture us on the ozone layer, when I read in the Daily Mail that he has got a great gas-guzzling car."*

Tom King *— "I expect King went to some ghastly little minor public school, with those awful glasses and his badly-fitting suits."*

John Major *— "What a mediocre little creep he is, with his glasses and silly voice. I expect he went to some ghastly grammar school. I don't hold it against him that he sacked me, but it just shows how useless he is."*

Mrs Thatcher *— "The greatest sex symbol of our century — with her piercing eyes and radiant handbag. I say Maggie should still be prime minister, and then I might still be in my job."*

© World Copyright Lord Clark of Supergun 1992

Chiu Mei Au Yeung, who works for VNU's *Computer Business Week*, was particularly thrilled as the holiday will give her an opportunity to sell her Hong-Kong based family, whom she has not seen for many years.

Magazine Week

Court out

CAMBRIDGE Crown Court will be closed this week for decorating work to be carried.

All the rooms of the court, excluding the court room and the robbing room, are being painted.

Cambridge Evening News

BBC CRISIS — CARRINGTON FLIES IN

by Our Media Staff **Jane Thynne-Stuff**

BRITAIN'S No. 1 trouble-shooter Lord Carryon last night flew out to Spain in a last-ditch effort to stem the growing crisis over the BBC's £2-billion disaster *El Marmalado.*

Named after BBC chairman Sir Marmalade Gussett, the £10-billion "sex, sunshine and suspender belts" soap opera last week lost its last two remaining viewers (El Sid and Dorita Bonqueros).

Getting The Birt

Said Lord Carrington at Gatwick: "The situation is very confused. There has been fighting at every level of the BBC since the full-scale of this disaster became obvious. My job, as I see it, is to appear on TV every night saying that something must be done, but that I am not the man to do it."

In recent weeks there has been mounting pressure on the Government to intervene to halt the ever-rising losses on what they are calling *El Disastero.*

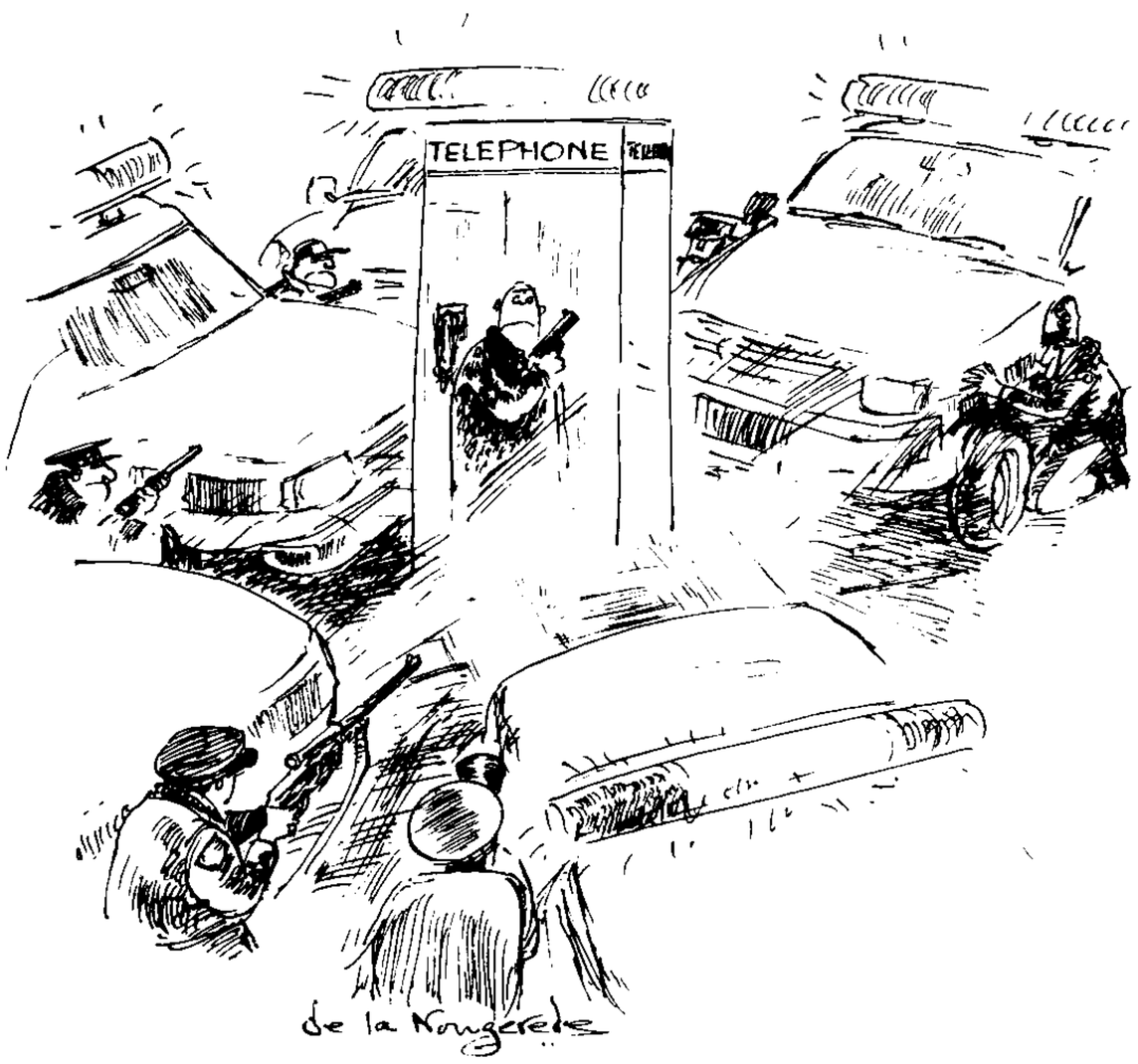
Hurd But Not Seen

On Tuesday crisis talks were held between the Prime Minister and Fun Minister David Melloran to examine the case for intervention to save the beleaguered soap opera.

It was argued that the collapse of the £200-billion series could flood Britain with unwanted actors and lead to the final collapse of the BBC's image in the eyes of the world.

But afterwards a spokesman stated that, after taking the best possible advice (Mr D. Hurd), it had been decided that there was nothing the Government could do about this or anything else.

Sir Marmalade Hussey is 107.



"Come on out, Bugsy – we know you're in there!"

This Week's Honorary Degrees

Actor Oliver Reed and Page Three Girl Linda Lusardi, seen here after receiving their Honorary Doctorates of Law at the University of Watford Gap.

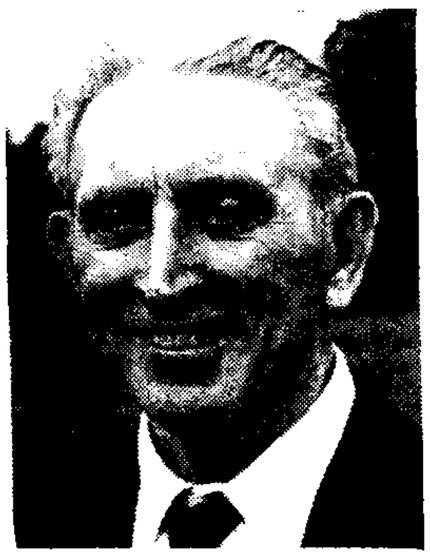
That new-look Radio 3

What You Are Missing (Because You Can't Pick It Up In Your Car Any More)

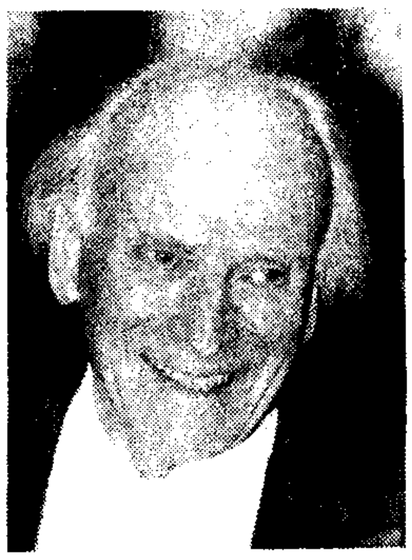
FEMALE ANNOUNCER *(Frances Wheen, for it is she):* Well, great, here we are again with another two hours of our round-the-clock, informal, unscripted, new-look listening sequence, *Drive Time*. Don't worry, there'll be plenty of music later, not to mention our regular arts round-up from the regions — where to go, what to see, and what's new on the out-of-town opera scene. And of course I'll be keeping you all posted on what's in the news — there have been some exciting new developments in Sarajevo this morning, and Sir Christopher Tugendhat of the Abbey National has made a very controversial new proposal about the repossessions crisis and how the Government could do something about it. And later in the programme I will be having a really brilliant live interview with one of my very favourite conductors, Si Rattle, and we'll be hearing about his very exciting plans for this year's Montepulciano Music Festival, including the really thrilling and sexy new production by Jonathan Miller of *The Magic Flute*, set in a terminal AIDS hospital in New York. Right on there, Jonathan! And, of course, being a doctor he brings a special insight into what Mozart would have thought about the HIV crisis. And now it's time for a time check — oh, shit, I've left my watch at home. I'm sure I'll be in terrible trouble with Nick Kenyon. He's our new boss and he's the genius behind this brilliant new way of not actually giving our listeners any music on the *Music Programme*

(contd 94kHz)

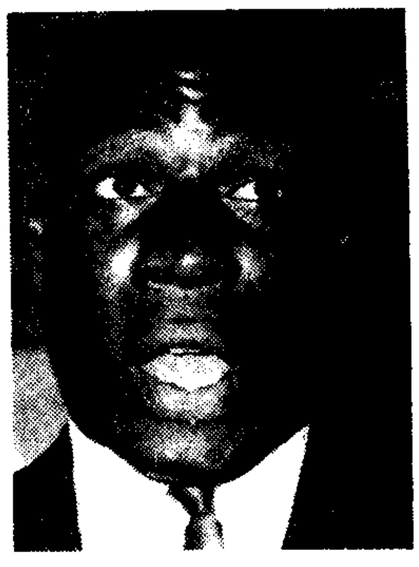
KINDRED SPIRITS *Custard lovers*



Lord Tonypandy
"I grew up in Wales. Times were hard and in the Valleys if you had custard you were one of the nobs. I can remember the first time I ever tasted real custard was in a Lyon's Corner House near the House of Commons."

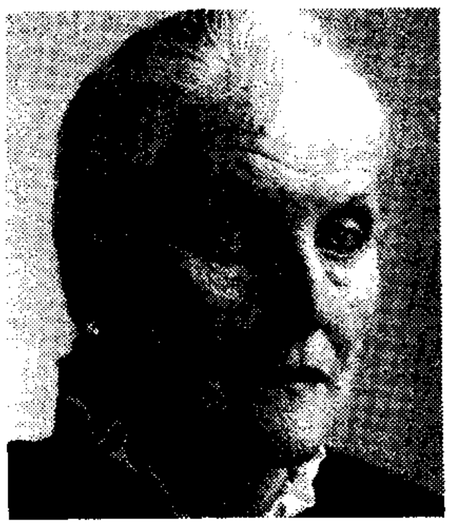


Sir Yehudi Menuhin
"Whenever I am abroad playing Brahms and Schumann, I always think of England — the green fields, the leafy lanes and your wonderful bowls of delightful custard. American custard does not taste as fine — one of the reasons why I decided to settle on these shores."



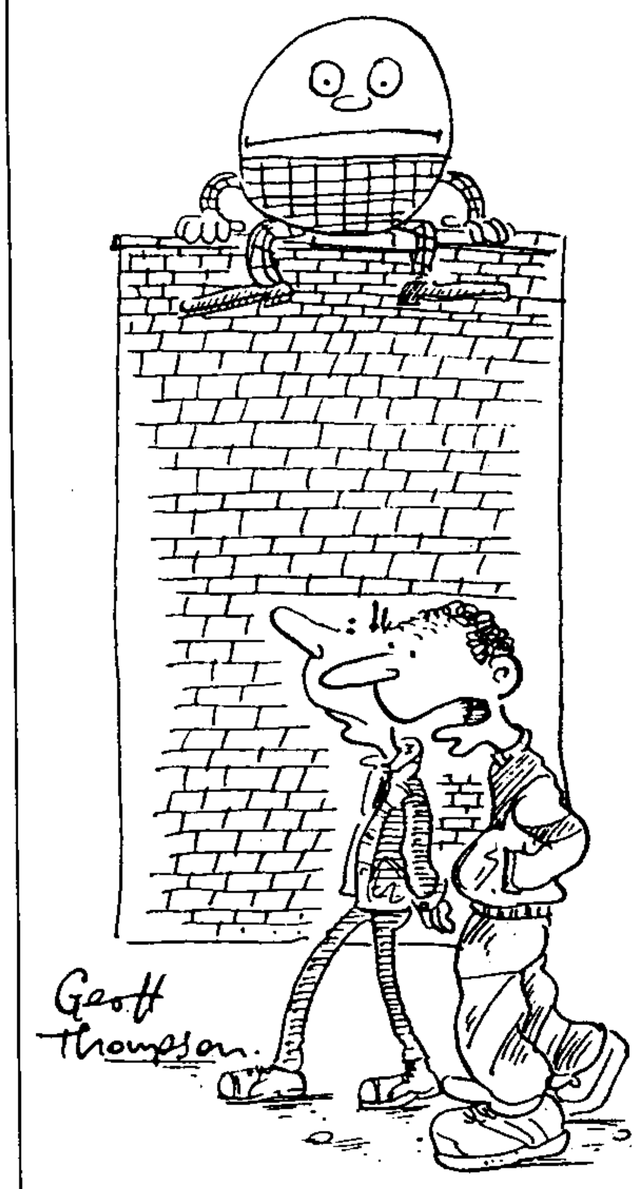
Frank Bruno
"I always eat a bowl of custard before a big fight. My manager says it does me good and helps me to relax."

Michael Fish
"Custard looks like falling in many parts of Scotland and Northern Ireland — moving across Central England by mid-day, it could be thick in places. So, if you're taking the car out, mind how you go."



Lady Diana Mosley
"I never liked custard as a little gel. I remember Charity and I being force-fed the stuff by Nanny Soames in the nursery at Waldegrave. When we visited the Führer at Berchtesgarten we were served the most delicious German 'Black Custard'. Hitler made it himself on a little Bavarian log-stove. I can see him now..."

Alan Bennett
"When I was a little boy we'd all go round on Saturday nights to Aunt Abigail's for custard butties, which she made specially for us little ones. Then one day she got taken poorly in the supermarket. It was kidney failure, the doctors said. After the funeral we *(contd p. 94)*



"Apparently he has a great off-the-wall sense of humour"

Where are they now?

No 94: Andrew Morton

In the early summer of 1992 a hitherto unknown reporter became the most famous journalist in the world, when he published a book entitled *Live And Let Di*. This sensational work revealed to an astonished world something that had hitherto been one of the most closely guarded state secrets of all time — *viz*. that all was not well in the marriage of the heir to the throne.

For the next three weeks no one could talk about anything else. It was said, by the greatest constitutional expert of the age, Professor Andrew Neill, that Morton's book (which Neill described as "a right little goer") would "precipitate the gravest constitutional crisis since Henry VIII had it off with that bird Pamella Boleyn".

However, a few weeks later, there were still millions of unsold copies of Morton's masterpiece next to the check-out till in every supermarket in the land, and the poor hack was totally forgotten.

"OK, Slim, turn around nice 'n' sloooow. Yup! Just as I thought. You've got a visible panty line"

MARILYN — NEW OVERDOSE THEORY

by Our Monroe Staff **Norma Jean Rook**

A SENSATIONAL new theory has been put forward in a documentary programme to be shown on television tonight (and every other night for the rest of the year).

Called *Marilyn — The New Theory*, the programme challenges the orthodox view that Marilyn Monroe is of any interest at all and makes the shocking claim that the public has had "a massive Marilyn overdose".

Gentlemen Prefer Anything but Marilyn

The producer goes further and states that the overdose is possibly lethal and mass death by boredom is the most likely outcome.

He says: "The public is the victim of the whole system. They don't have a chance. There's no way out for them. They can't stand it and in the end they are found in a coma in front of their televisions."

Arthur Miller is 106.

OLYMPIC RESULTS (latest)

400 Metres Synchronised Underwater Kayak Pairs

Gold: Benson and Hedges (New Zealand) 23.64
Silver: Hall and Jagger (Dis-Unified Team) 26.24
Bronze: Li Ping and Li Pong (China) 27.42
43rd (out of 43): Fluck and Law (GB). Did not finish.

Drug Running

Gold: GB (4 athletes sent home)
Silver: Unified Team (3)
Bronze: China (not caught yet)

Toe Sucking (All-Comers)

Gold: Antonia de Sancha (Spain)
Disqualified: D. Mellor (GB)

Medal Rigging

Gold: Spain
Silver: Spain
Bronze: Spain
(That's enough medals — Ed.)

The victorious Albanian Synchronised Bicycle Hockey team

PETER McLIE

The World's Worst Columnist

HERE'S a funny thing. You don't hear much about Marilyn Monroe these days, do you?

Don't you remember? Not so long ago she was everybody's favourite pin-up with films like *On The Waterfront, Duck Soup* and *Genevieve*.

Yet after that dazzling debut, she completely faded from view. And today her name probably means little or nothing to anyone.

Funny old world, isn't it?

☐ **DON'T you find it curious that a pretty young lassie like Lady Helen Windsor is still waiting for Mr Right to come along?**

All the other young Royals are happily married and have settled down.

But not the bouncy young daughter of the Duchess of Kent. What do you think is the matter with her? Perhaps she puts her love of horses first.

☐ *HAVE you seen the latest idea from America in the shops? They are called gloves, and they provide warmth and comfort to your hands during a cold spell.*

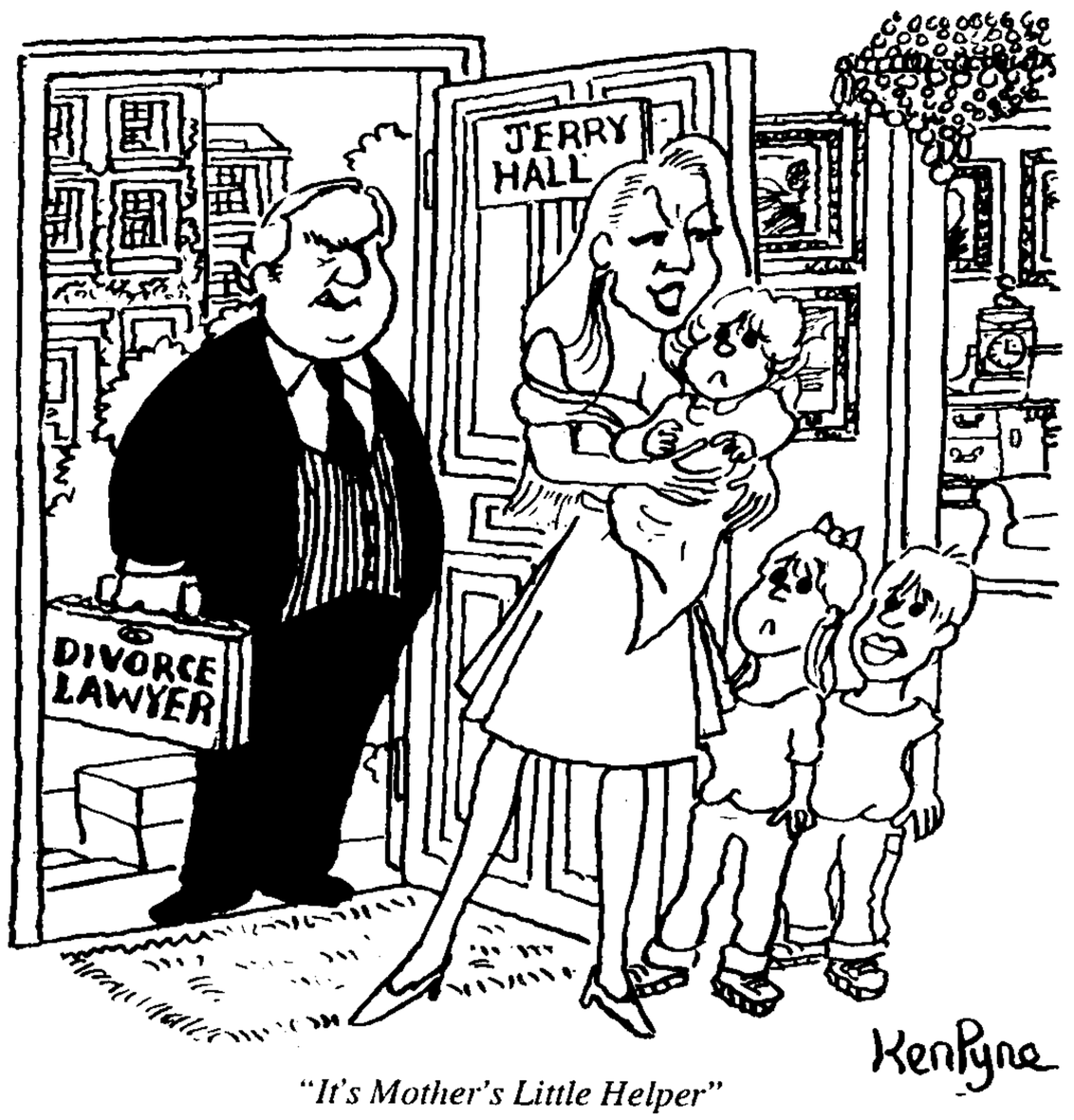
If you see a pair of these so-called gloves, I advise you strongly to snap them up, as they seem to be very thin on the ground just now.

☐ **ISN'T it time we had a bit of real choice when it came to our TV viewing?**

Two channels are not much to choose between when you think that in America there are at least five.

Just imagine. Channel 3? Or even 4? The mind positively boggles. Och aye!

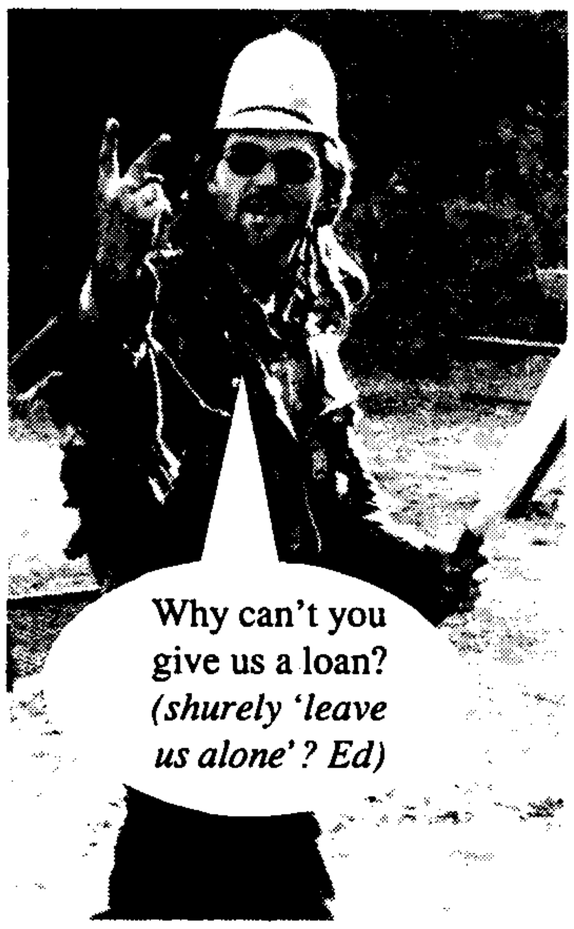
(You're fired. Ed)



"It's Mother's Little Helper"

23 August - 11 September
9:00am Daily except Saturdays. Finals held on Friday of each week.
GREAT YARMOUTH OPEN BOWELS FESTIVAL
Great Yarmouth Bowling Greens, Marine Parade.

What's on, When and Where East Anglia

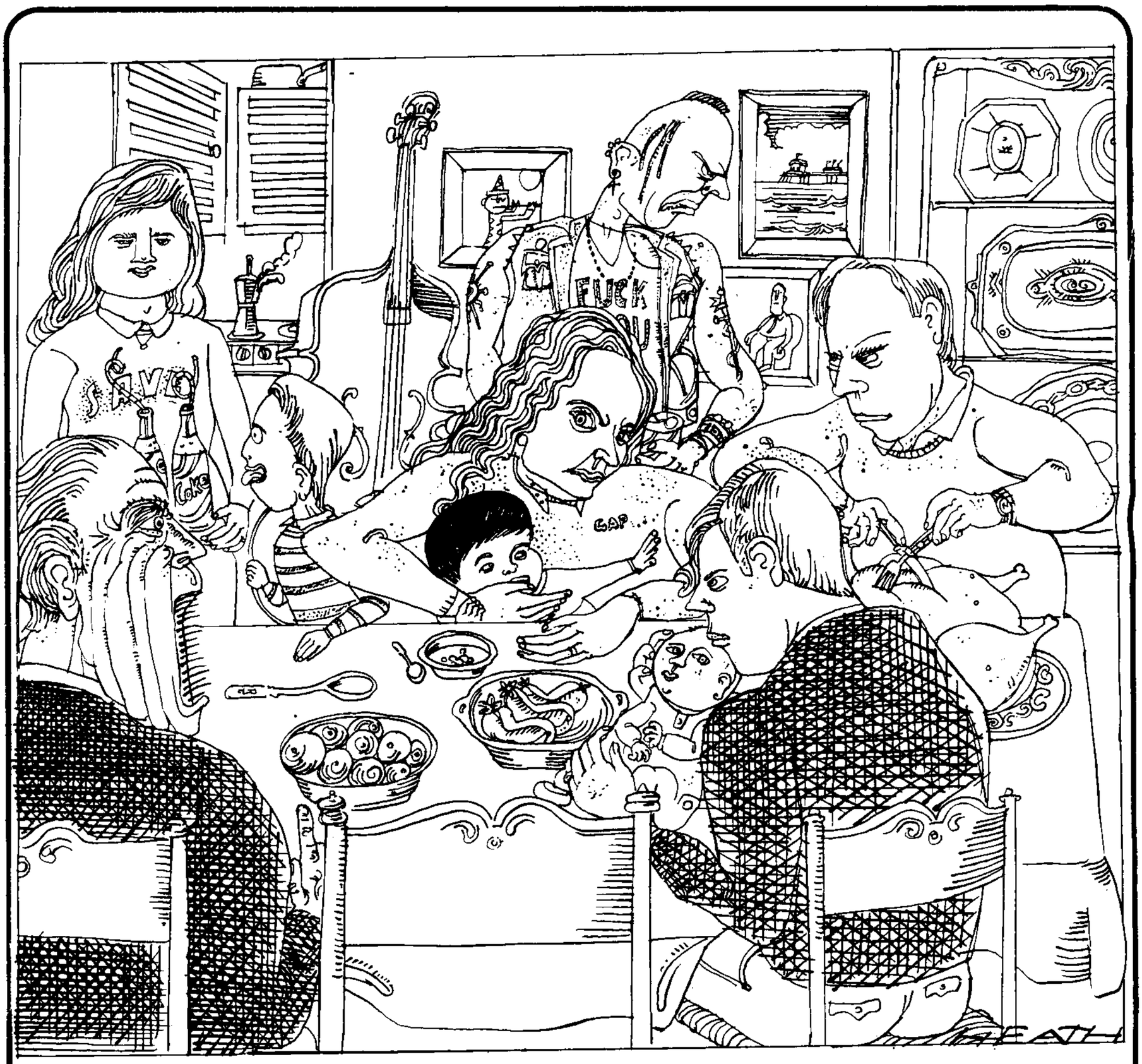


TRAVELLERS SHOCK

Apology by the Guardian, the Observer and Others

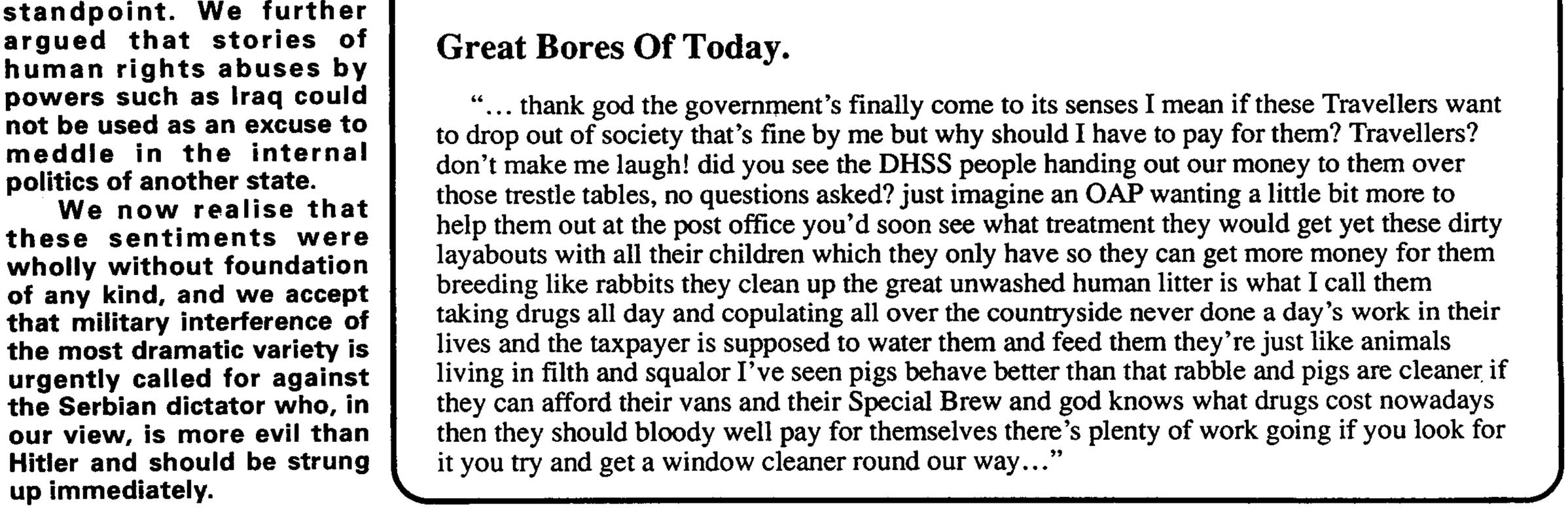
During 1991 we may have given the impression that armed intervention in the affairs of a foreign country, eg Iraq, was an act of imperialistic aggression, indefensible from a moral standpoint. We further argued that stories of human rights abuses by powers such as Iraq could not be used as an excuse to meddle in the internal politics of another state.

We now realise that these sentiments were wholly without foundation of any kind, and we accept that military interference of the most dramatic variety is urgently called for against the Serbian dictator who, in our view, is more evil than Hitler and should be strung up immediately.

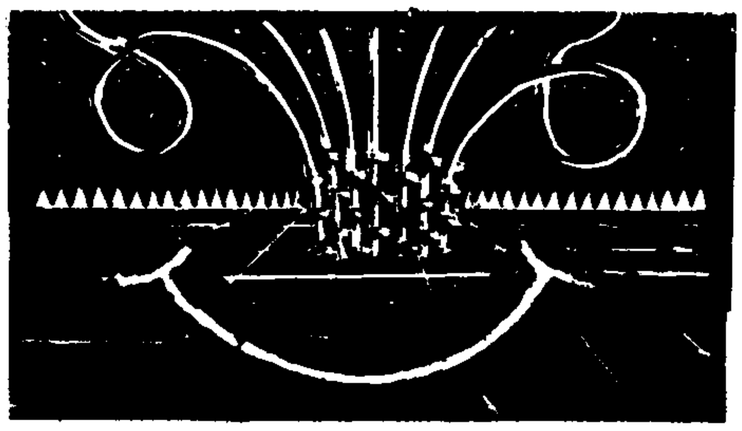


Great Bores Of Today.

"... thank god the government's finally come to its senses I mean if these Travellers want to drop out of society that's fine by me but why should I have to pay for them? Travellers? don't make me laugh! did you see the DHSS people handing out our money to them over those trestle tables, no questions asked? just imagine an OAP wanting a little bit more to help them out at the post office you'd soon see what treatment they would get yet these dirty layabouts with all their children which they only have so they can get more money for them breeding like rabbits they clean up the great unwashed human litter is what I call them taking drugs all day and copulating all over the countryside never done a day's work in their lives and the taxpayer is supposed to water them and feed them they're just like animals living in filth and squalor I've seen pigs behave better than that rabble and pigs are cleaner if they can afford their vans and their Special Brew and god knows what drugs cost nowadays then they should bloody well pay for themselves there's plenty of work going if you look for it you try and get a window cleaner round our way..."


SO RATHER THAN GO INTO REHAB YET AGAIN, GARY'S DECIDED TO TAKE HIS SHRINK'S ADVICE AND TRY SOMETHING DIFFERENT?
THAT'S RIGHT BARRY.
YOU NEVER KNOW, GETTING TOTALLY AWAY FROM THE PRESSURES OF LIFE FOR A WHILE MAY WELL DO THE TRICK.
I HOPE SO JOHNSON.
HE'S OBVIOUSLY VERY WORRIED ABOUT HIS HABIT ISN'T HE?
OH YES. I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM SO AGITATED FOR YEARS.
IT'S BROWN FOR GODSAKE! I NEVER WEAR BROWN!
I HAVE SERIOUS DOUBTS ABOUT THIS MONASTIC RETREAT IDEA.
IT'S CALLED "MONKING OUT" THESE DAYS.

DIARY



THE RIGHT REV. DAVID JENKINS, BISHOP OF DURHAM

When Jesus — or the quasi-historical character we now know for want of a better word as "Jesus" — said "Get thee behind me, Satan," if indeed he *did* say that, what exactly did he mean? One of my duties as a senior Bishop and a caring, concerned, shall we say "immensely intelligent" person, is to explain the often very complex, one might almost say *abstruse* words of "Jesus" to what one might call the "simple, ordinary people", themselves incapable — through no fault of their own, let me add — of abstract or intelligent thought.

Let's wrestle with that quotation step by step, shall we? *Get thee*: obviously, in one's everyday life, one "gets" the shopping — the vegetables from the butcher, the milk from the greengrocer, and so on — but here "Jesus" seems to want to "get thee". Of course, "thee" might possibly have been a mishearing on the part of the scribe. Perhaps the man — or woman — we know as "Jesus" really said, "get three", meaning three apples, bananas, fish, or whatever. "Get three apples behind me, Satan" might seem an unusual request in the desert, but it in a mysterious sense it is in the nature of our role as fully viable human beings that we must wrestle with all the available options.

Behind me: "Behind" is a word some people in the wider community use instead of "bottom". The choice is theirs and it is not up to us or to anybody to tell them that they are either "wrong" or "right". It can also mean "not in front" but then if he had meant that, I think "Jesus" would have said, "Get thee not in front of me, Satan". The meaning I prefer is "Get thee behind me", in the sense of "Frankly, I would thoroughly welcome your support, Satan, at this difficult moment in time."

Satan: Satan has had what one might call a "bad press" in the past few years. It is as if our society feels that it cannot cope with someone as forthright and what I would call *imaginative* in his views as Satan, who, after all, was only doing his best to fulfil his own potential in the broader environment, struggling like the rest of us to make a positive contribution to the whole exciting pool of Christian thought, yet he has been constantly vilified by the press and what one might call the "Establishment" for his efforts. Small wonder that "Jesus" had so much time for him, asking for Satan's help and support when he needed it most.

I do hope that this brief explanation has done much to clarify the message of "Jesus" in your minds. For further edification, might I suggest you inwardly digest my (at times somewhat controversial) book, *The Compassionate Satan: Learning to Care the Beelzebub Way* (£14.99).

Some people with an axe to grind suggest that in a mysterious sense I court publicity. Not so, as a detailed perusal of each of my two hundred fully indexed and cross-referenced albums of press cuttings will make clear. Nevertheless, it is true that, from time to time, I have felt duty-bound to speak out on important issues. These occasions include:

October 1982: Outcry greets my suggestion that "Jesus" was not a carpenter at all but a commercial wholesaler specialising in softwood furniture for the thriving export market.

January 1986: I am featured in all the major national daily newspapers, on *The World at One* and on many local magazine programmes after I make the mild suggestion that God is not an old man with a beard. "This is a hopelessly outdated way of looking at God," I say, "It seems to me obvious that she is in fact a highly successful career-woman, fully capable of bringing up a family and holding down a job, with a variety of interests including the Latin-American novel and the late films of Martin Scorsese."

May 1989: In deep water again for wondering aloud whether as what one might call in the broadest sense "Christians" we are right to keep goldfish as "pets". Is it really fair in the second half of the 20th century to place these complex and sophisticated creatures in glass bowls in our living-rooms? As an active member of the Christian Goldfish Fellowship, I feel I must speak out, I'm sorry, but I do.

All this publicity, however unwelcome — and I have been seen on countless radio and television programmes (full list available from my press office) making quite clear how unwelcome it all is — does mean, alas, that I am in a mysterious sense occasionally recognised in the street. Only yesterday, an elderly gentleman asked me for my autograph. After I had obliged him, he said, "Why didn't you sign your own name?" "Well," I explained, "My own name is Dr David Jenkins, but I felt it proper to sign it by my stage name, The Bishop of Durham." "Oh, I'm terribly sorry," he replied, mysteriously, "I thought you were Dame Margaret Rutherford." He was obviously out of his mind, poor fellow. The Government must surely act to provide a stable, caring, enclosed environment for people such as this.

For a long time, I have found the conventional marriage service a trifle simplistic. As a response, "I do" seems to me in a mysterious sense far too dogmatic a notion for the overwhelming complexities of modern society in the real world, with its fast cars, television sets, trains, boats, "Ninja Myrtles", cravats, "skiffle" music and so forth. If only others would join with me in probing further into this whole business of what we really mean by marriage, I feel sure we could get a tremendously enriching dialogue going. For the time being, I am urging all couples who come to me wishing to get married to follow what I would call these rather more *thoughtful* responses, penned after a great deal of thought and wrestling by my own imperfect hand:

Bishop of Durham (that's me!!): Do you take this man to be your, etc, etc?

Female partner: I (*name to be entered here*), neither do nor don't / But I prefer to look at the whole question in a wider perspective / What do we mean when we say "I do"? / In many ways, we mean "I don't" / Though without the negative connotations / But if we look at it in the broader "religious" sense / We must admit / That "I neither do nor don't" / Is far more to the point.

Bishop of Durham: In some mysterious sense, I pronounce thee husband and wife, or vice-versa, to have and to hold until some of the fizz seems to have gone out of the whole thing. Amen.

After this service, I would advise not one of our dreary old "hymns" — far too gloomy! — but perhaps a brief "happening": mime can be most effective, but you might also consider Modern Dance or aerobics. And always remember this: JESUS LOVES YOU (*if there was a Jesus, and whatever we mean by that elusive word "love"*). Cheers!

"Fred, you're way too allegro"

Security was stepped up, with hundreds of extra police and troops on duty, after news of her visit was leaked to two Irish Sunday newspapers. She decided to go ahead with the trip after security chiefs hastily assessed the risks.

She was flown to Belfast city centre by helicopter by IRA guerillas. *(Reuter)*

Times of Malta

And worryingly for Mr Mellor, in 1983 Mrs Thatcher also refused Cecil Parkinson's offer to resign about a month before the Tory conference, but he was finally forced to go after *The Times* published a litter by his pregnant secretary-mistress of 12 years Sara Keays.

For the moment, Downing Street is attempting to brazen it out — claiming there will be no change in departmental briefs

Western Mail

Literary Review

Season of lists and mellow dreadfulness

"Do you have anything on 'Skin Cancer & Celibacy'?"

AUGUST is a dead month for the publishing trade. In fact, given the current economic gloom, every month is a dead month in the publishing trade, but August is deader than most.

A few beach books creep out unnoticed into the pale summer sun, the publishers slumber on the patios in Pont St Esprit, Jeffrey Archer, Joanna Trollope and David Lodge battle it out at the airport bookstalls, and the only sound comes from the slap of fat autumn catalogues falling on to reviewers' doormats.

Publishers love the autumn. They do two-thirds of their business in it; half of the average firm's turnover can be chalked up in the six-week lead-in to Christmas. The fun of autumn catalogues, though, lies not in marking down the row of sure-fire bestsellers from the likes of Maeve Binchy and Len Deighton, but in wondering whether what is so confidently advertised will actually be vouchsafed.

Pride of place in the HarperCollins catalogue, for example, is occupied by Ben Pimlott's long-awaited life of Harold Wilson, a work apparently incomplete even at this late stage. Similarly, the literary editor of the *Sunday Times* recently filled much of a Radio Four books programme with a lavish encomium of Paul Bailey's new novel, *Sugar Cane*. As it happens, this has been put back to the spring for the simple reason that the old boy, a famous procrastinator, hasn't finished it yet.

Certain to appear, alas, is a hulking load of publishers' traditional autumn offerings — extraordinary books that nobody will want to buy. Who, for instance, is going to pay hard-earned money for Cecil Parkinson's memoirs, David Owen's poetry anthology or Tony Benn and his research assistant's *The Agreement of the People: A New Constitution for Britain*?

The autumn crop of anthologies — normally a fail-safe way of bumping up turnover — is more than usually desperate: lowlights include A.N. Wilson on Church and Clergy (Faber), John Mortimer on Villains (Oxford) and — something that at first glance looked like an amusing joke on the part of the catalogue compilers — *The Penguin Book of 20th Century Speeches*, edited by Brian MacArthur.

It being the autumn, famous names predominate on the fiction shelf. Most of them can expect short shrift from the angry young critics, in particular Malcolm Bradbury with *Dr Criminale* (Secker) — Bradbury's conspicuous merits as a novelist have become overshadowed in the public mind by his reputation as a literary log-roller, and of course it's so much more interesting to review the novelist rather than the novel.

In the same department, A.S. Byatt's *Angels and Insects* (Chatto), two abstruse novellas about Victorian intellectual life, will be read with great bewilderment by a small proportion of the 300,000 or so people who shelled out for the paperback of *Possession*.

Here and there as usual lurks the faint smell of controversy: A.N. Wilson's *Jesus* (Sinclair Stevenson) — very faint, that — what was to have been a biography of Stephen Spender by Hugh David, now reduced to "A Portrait with background" as a consequence of the subject's nervousness over revelations from his early life, Neil Lyndon's *No More Sex War... The Failure of Feminism* (yawn), and Humphrey Carpenter's life of Benjamin Britten, the latter no doubt crammed with salacious details of the Britten/Pears menage.

All in all, a very typical autumn lies ahead: some predictable money-spinners, crowds of largely indifferent novels in search of the Booker, which should be won by Barry Unsworth's *Sacred Hunger* (Hamish Hamilton), and, all too typically, some real horrors. It is early days yet and the autumn deluge has still to begin, but already one would give a lot of money not to have to possess Jeremy Reed's biography of his eponym, Lou, Sean French's *Fatherhood: Men Write About Fathering* or Bel Mooney's *Perspectives for Living: Conversations on Bereavement and Love.*

RADIO TIMES

ONE OF the first things former *Observer* hack Nicholas Kenyon did on taking over as controller of Radio Three was to give notice to its best senior announcer, Peter Barker, just five months before he was due to retire from the Beeb anyway, plus several other respected veterans.

The second thing was to axe the long-running and popular Radio 3 evening show *Mainly for Pleasure*, which after some 10 years on air was getting the highest audience figures of all weekday shows. There was universal outcry from a large proportion of Radio 3's sparse listenership, who swamped *Feedback* as well as the letters page of the *Radio Times*, which for once was unable to present a balanced for-and-against selection of letters. Every one of them was against.

The change is widely seen as nothing more than rearranging the musical deckchairs on the Titanic — Radio 3 being seen by Birt and Checkland as an expensive old ironclad they think should be allowed to sink under its own lack of steam.

Kenyon, himself Birt-driven, has replaced *Mainly for Pleasure* with a news-ridden, plugs-led, youf-oriented amiable, disc jockey-type chat show, which has had devotees turning off in despair. In it, the band of mostly fey gramophone reviewers are obliged to preciously lisp traffic reports, gale warnings and even — to the consternation of the hardnosed news room hacks — national and international news bulletins.

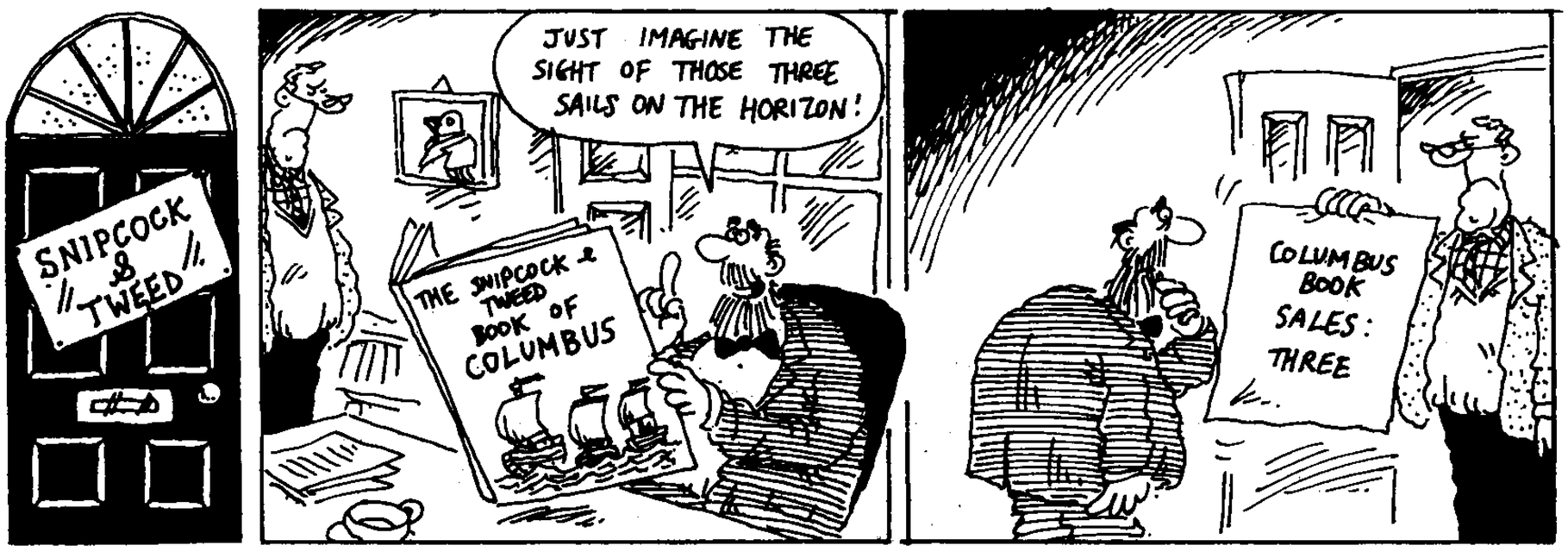
And what was the last piece of music played in the last edition of *Mainly for Pleasure*? It was a little 1930s cabaret song ending "Let's have a happy ending, all the clouds will roll away — let's be gay."

POP EYE

VETERAN pop music hackette Gill Pringle, who has turned up in the features department of the *Sunday Express* (along with former kiss 'n' tell girl Sally-Ann Lasson), recently wrote a profile of roly-poly rock musician Greg Lake, of Emerson Lake and Palmer.

As is her custom with major rock stars, Pringle felt it necessary to establish a rapport with Lake before plunging into print about him and accordingly entered into Ugandan discussions with him during his European tour. So delighted was Lake at her attentions that he spent a few days staying at her London flat on his return to England.

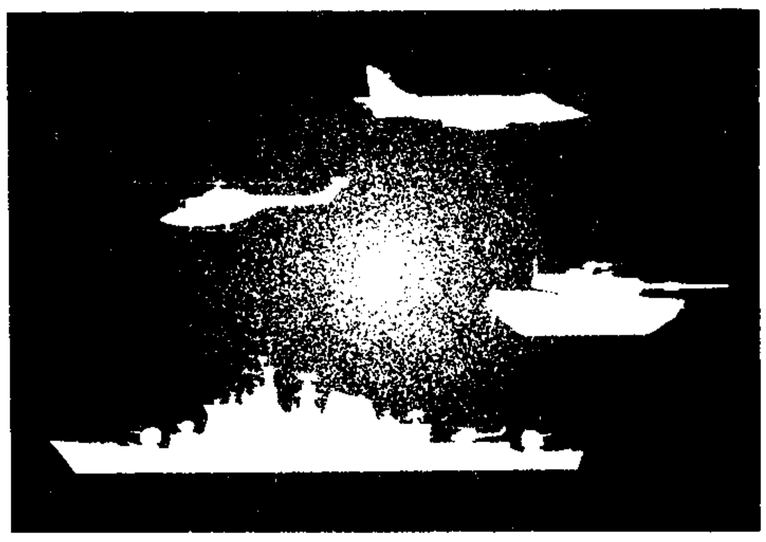
However, his romantic illusions were shattered when he accidentally came across a draft of her article about him in which he was characterised as an ageing dinosaur of rock. Lake immediately left her and issued his press agent with instructions to pay Pringle off and bury the article.


SNIPCOCK & TWEED
JUST IMAGINE THE SIGHT OF THOSE THREE SAILS ON THE HORIZON!
THE SNIPCOCK & TWEED BOOK OF COLUMBUS
COLUMBUS BOOK SALES: THREE

'Bookworm' is in Tuscany

IRAQI SUPERGUN

Arms and the madman



PRESIDENT George Bush and prime minister John Major would love to boost their flagging fortunes with another air strike on Iraq — but there is a problem.

Every time they rattle their sabres and alert the bombing crews who already have instructions for further devastation of Iraqi cities, they set off another round of allegations about the secret conspiracy in Britain and the United States to supply arms to Saddam Hussein — in spite of government embargoes banning such supplies.

In the US, as the *Financial Times* has revealed, Bush himself is heavily involved in the financing of this operation through a corrupt bank in Georgia; in Britain, more light is shed on the secret arming by a new set of confidential documents recently sent in to the *Eye*. The documents are all the more significant since they involve a company closely connected to the man now responsible for arms sales abroad — Jonathan Aitken, minister for defence procurement.

The company was BMARC, whose name was changed to Astra Defence Systems soon after it was taken over by the then-booming Grantham arms company, Astra. Aitken, in whose constituency BMARC was based, begged to become a main board director of Astra, but had to make do with a directorship of the subsidiary.

In autumn 1989, after taking over the Belgian arms company PRB, Astra's chairman Gerald James and managing director Christopher Gumbley reported to the department of trade that PRB had some arms contracts which were plainly designed to supply heavy artillery to Saddam. They were told to report to two men — a Mr Primrose and a Mr Holdness — who were not at the department of trade at all, but in secret ministry of defence offices in Soho Square.

James and Gumbley never had any doubt that Primrose and Holdness were British intelligence agents based, for convenience's sake only, at the MoD. Neither spook seemed at all worried by the revelations about arms for Saddam and told the businessmen to let the contracts run.

When James reported this to the Commons trade and industry select committee inquiry into the Iraqi supergun last year, much scorn was poured on him by Conservative members of the committee, led by chairman Kenneth Warren. James was, their questions suggested, obsessed with nonexistent spooks. But when Labour members suggested that Primrose and Holdness might give evidence to the committee, the ministry of defence refused — on "grounds of national security".

Early in 1990, as tension started to rise in the Middle East, James and Gumbley were removed from the Astra board in a coup organised by the institutions which held the main shares (chiefly 3i, chairman Sir John Cuckney). The management of the company was taken over by a strange guntoting defence consultant to the Midland Bank called Stefan Kock. Two other key figures In the new management were Major General Donald Isles, a former MoD director of weapons who had just been nominated by the Thatcher government as deputy lieutenant of Lincolnshire, and Mr W. McNaught, who had worked for Westland Helicopters when Sir John Cuckney was chairman.

The new documents obtained by the *Eye* start with a letter dated 2 May 1990 by Mr McNaught to Mr Bob Primrose, who is quaintly described on the top of the letter as "director of marketing services, Ministry of Defence, Stuart House, 23-25 Soho Square". The date is significant; for a few days earlier parts of a supergun for Iraq had been seized by British customs officers.

A huge row started in Parliament and the press about the secret and illegal arming of Saddam by British companies. "As a result of all the recent activity in the press relating to the sale of potential weapons to Iraq via Jordan," wrote Mr McNaught, "I am in process of reviewing all contracts undertaken by Astra over the past few years where the end user is Jordan."

One contract, he reported, was for 300,000 M739 fuse booster pellets. These were to be matched with components delivered from a US company called Rexon Technology. These components had been allowed into Britain by customs, and the pellets were already being made. McNaught enclosed in his report a document from Rexon Technology which named the consignee of the pellets as "Al Fao Organisation c/o Jordanian Armed Forces".

Al Fao is named in the book *Unholy Babylon* by Adel Darwish and Gregory Alexander as a project to arm Iraq from the west with 210mm artillery with a longer range than any other guns in the world. The end user for such sophisticated equipment could not possibly have been Jordan. The pellets were destined for Iraq. The secret and embargo-breaking nature of the contract to supply them was plainly understood by Rexon, which had stated clearly on the front of its documentation: INSTRUCTION LABELS TO BE REMOVED BEFORE THE CONSIGNMENT LEAVES.

On 3 May 1990, McNaught was hastily summoned to the DTI in London where he met with Stuart Nunn, director (policy unit) of export controls and Mr M.V. Coolican of the export control department. The licence to export the pellets was revoked. McNaught conveyed this decision to the "board of management" of his company — which he defined, correctly, as S.A. Kock. Copies went to the company secretary, R.A. Smith, and D.E Isles, the Major General. "I would remind everyone," stressed Mr McNaught "not to discuss these events outside the company."

This most astonishing feature of this blatantly embargobreaking contract was that it had never been declared to the main Astra board. Though the pellets were to be manufactured at the main Astra factory near Grantham, neither chairman James nor managing director Gumbley had ever heard of it. The whole contract appears to have been agreed by the BMARC (Astra Defence Systems) subsidiary without the main board's knowledge. It was only disclosed after the "shit hit the fan" with the seizure of the supergun barrels at Teesport. If Customs men had not acted so rashly and unexpectedly in seizing those barrels, Saddam Hussein would have got not only his supergun but the whole vast complex of artillery of which the Astra pellets were an essential part.

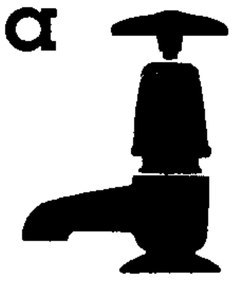
The documents are further evidence of the depth and secrecy of the huge operation to provide arms for Saddam when official government policy was to ban all such shipments. The operation could not even have been started without assistance at the very highest level of important people in the government service, especially those masquerading under the heading "intelligence".

None of these matters have been exposed by the long inquiry by the Commons select committee, whose mealy-mouthed warnings about the role of the intelligence services in arming Saddam have been contemptuously ignored by the Government. Jonathan Aitken is just the man to investigate these new revelations and set the record straight. He served on BMARC with Major General Isles, Gordon Avery (who was Isles's sidekick at the MoD) and Stefan Kock.

Aitken left before the boardroom coup in 1990, and was not a director when the pellets contract for Iraq was negotiated. Now, however, as minister for defence procurement, he has all the powers he could ever need to get to the root of the scandal and expose it before the Government launches its troops once more against the weaponry it helped to supply.

WELSH WATER

Taffia was a thief...



WELSH Water plc again topped the thieving water companies league when it announced its £138 million profit. But while average bills will rise to £223 next year — 30 percent higher than neighbouring Severn Trent — consumers cannot rely on quality being up to the price.

The health of Welsh Water users is threatened by high levels of aluminium and lead in their water. Aluminium, a substantial cause of Alzheimer's disease, is present in some areas at a background level of 50-100 microgrammes per litre, which is above recommended EEC limits.

Welsh Water also sometimes adds aluminium sulphate to its "product" to make the water clearer and reduce bacteria, and it does so without warning. When last autumn a consumer in Talybont complained of sickness, the local council found levels of 382 microgrammes, almost twice the level the EEC regards as the maximum admissible concentration (200 mcgs). The local environmental health officer commented: "Dwr Cymru is not required to tell us if they use aluminium sulphate, but you would think being an industry involved in a fundamental basic commodity of life they should have told us. It is a real worry because it exceeds the limit."

The alternative to using aluminium sulphate is ferric sulphate, but that can cause further problems in areas with lead piping as it rots the lead, causing higher concentrations of lead in drinking water. Lead is, of course, the biggest threat to public health as it is known to affect the brains of children.

While lead mains are being replaced by Welsh Water, an unknown number of Welsh homes have lead piping and little has been done about that problem. Indeed, Welsh Water sanctimoniously points out that it isn't its responsibility. The company offers help in replacing lead piping but, as it doesn't know where the problem is, it's not surprising to find a dismally low take-up of grant aid.

A monopoly like Welsh Water would make the Sicillian Mafia drool at the prospects, but the Taffia got there first.

The privatisation of Welsh Water in 1989 was overseen by John Elfred Jones, the ex-Welsh Office civil servant who is also a part-time director of HTV (£30,000 pa) and member of the Government's tame Welsh Language Board.

His "success" in steering Welsh Water into private hands was smoothed by the Government handing over £400 million of public money to wipe out an accumulated debt to sweeten the share issue. His reward was a massive bonus. As chairman of Welsh Water his pay shot up from a measly £76,000 in 1989/90 to £143,000 in 1990/91.

John Elfred Jones claimed in the *Western Mail* that his pay was the rate for the job of a large company with massive assets and profits. He appeared to have forgotten that he was in charge of a monopoly which could, with impunity, increase prices by more than 100 percent in five years to make those profits.

As John Elfred Jones steps down as chairman this year he will also have a further £300,000 worth of share options which he will be able to sell in January. That would allow him to walk away from Welsh Water with well over half a million pounds since privatisation.

The Taffia, meanwhile, will continue to profit as the new chairman is Iain Evans, a non-executive director of Welsh Water, whose own company LEK Partnership has sold services worth £1 million to Welsh Water under a contract which will continue when he takes over. Iain Evans was also chairman of the committee that increased John Elfred Jones's salary to £143,000 — when it comes to writing out its own pay cheques, the Taffia has little to learn from Sicily.

RAIL PRIVATISATION

Flagships at half mast

STAFF at British Rail Engineering Ltd (BREL) are nervously watching how hundreds of workers at ailing train-repair company RFS Industries are sacked, both companies sharing the distinction of being flagships of BR privatisation.

Doncaster-based RFS was part of the nationalised BREL before some repair activities were hived-off by the Government in 1987. Now the private company's management admits that it was responsible for RFS's current state — which is so desperate that survival depends on 244 job losses by October, salaries being cut by 5 percent and employees losing their concessionary rail travel.

Shares in the company are worth "virtually nil", and union bosses are considering legal action against RFS's plans to make only statutory redundancy payments as opposed to contractual ones which are four times higher.

All this is almost identical to the situation at train-builder and repairer BREL (see *Eyes passim*), privatised in 1989 and expecting to make a £3.5 million loss this year. BREL shares are worth "virtually nil" (to quote the chairman) because of bad management, and the RMT union is bringing a test case against BREL for withdrawal of employees' free-travel facilities.

So what have government ministers learnt from these important privatisation pilots? That private management is ideally suited to cocking-up thriving BR activities — and doing so in double quick time. This lesson convinced them to press ahead with their white paper on wholesale BR privatisation.

GAS PRIVATISATION

Let's play monopoly

BRITISH GAS has finally asked for its activities to be referred to the Monopolies Commission. This desperate move follows years of warring with its regulator, Ofgas, and aims to end Ofgas's needling once and for all.

Ofgas has been infuriated by the devious tactics used by British Gas to safeguard its monopoly and evade regulation; and the referral will be the first in which the Monopolies Commission subjects a privatised utility to full-scale inspection.

The trouble stems directly from the way British Gas was privatised in 1986 by a government desperate to make a fast buck by flogging off its nationalised utilities. In the hurry to sell, no consideration was given to the consequence of handing British Gas over to a privately-owned monopoly which could stick two fingers up to government and consumers alike.

And who was the minister responsible? Step forward Peter Walker, then energy secretary... and now a member of the British Gas board! No doubt he is wondering what the Monopolies Commission will do to the private monopoly he helped create.

Walker was appointed a non-executive director in 1990, only a month after leaving government. He must now prepare himself for investigation by the commission, followed by the painful experience of being at the receiving end when Michael "El Presidente" Heseltine accepts the commission's report and, almost certainly, uses it to recast the formula invented by Walker.

In the City it is said that Walker's presence on the board is not a happy one. He has even been described as "the spy in the camp". Robert Evans, British Gas chairman, invited him to join thinking it would be a way to avoid political problems. But the Thatcherite regime which he served has moved on, and today no one in government circles appears to take much notice of what Walker says.

Nor has he been much heeded on the board when telling colleagues not to rock the boat (he tried to dissuade them from facing a head-on conflict at the Monopolies Commission). There are those, indeed, who say his arrival on the board has been a disaster.

Non-executive directors (part-timers) are often held to be justified in their views because they hold jobs elsewhere. They are therefore independent and objective and the ones who can put a friendly arm on the chairman's shoulders and tell him that enough is enough. Walker, who is paid between £20,001 and £25,000 a year for popping into British Gas, may be reserving himself for such an occasion. But he has sound experience in leaving companies at just the right time (cf Slater Walker and the Maxwell empire).

NUCLEAR WASTE

Hole with a mint in it

THE government agency charged with finding a way to dispose of nuclear waste is trying a new tack. Realising that it will never win permission to build a gigantic underground dump at Gosforth, near Sellafield, it is planning to ask for permission to build a "rock laboratory".

This, it will be said, is simply a research centre where experts will investigate the geology which, it will be argued, you cannot properly find out about until you go down below the surface. In practice, if it goes ahead, its advocates hope it will be developed into the full-size dump on the basis that so much money will have been spent on the site that they had better use it.

Nirex, the Nuclear Industry Radioactive Waste Executive, has been growing increasingly gloomy about its prospect of winning permission for the dump from Cumbria county council. But a laboratory has a nice friendly sound to it, and British Nuclear Fools hopes it can get what it wants by this sideways approach. It would mean substantial investment in the area because, whatever the propaganda may suggest, the "laboratory" would in practice be a huge underground cavern costing tens of millions.

Patrick Green, nuclear expert at Friends of the Earth, commented: "This scheme would tie further development to the Sellafield area. Their hope is that once the 'laboratory' has been there for a number of years, people will have got used to it. There is a lot of lobbying going on. NIREX has reached a stage where it really should be thinking of pulling out from the site. It initially had a plan to drill 21 boreholes. The first four have shown that the groundwater is going the wrong way at the wrong speed.

"We know that when NIREX had a meeting with RAWMAC [the Radioactive Waste Management Advisory Committee] in May, there was blood on the walls. The NIREX geology and hydro-geology report apparently contained an embarrassing mathematical error which suggested that the groundwater could return to the surface in as little time as 10 years. RAWMAC told NIREX to re-do the report and, lo and behold, NIREX announced one year's delay in June. Cumbria county council has received a consultant's report saying that the dump should not go ahead because of unsuitable geological conditions."

SEWAGE

Cornwall smells a rat

JOHN BROWN, the engineering and construction group, has been circulating water companies with news of its new sewage treatment plant which, it argues, is so effective that the infection in sewage is completely eradicated leaving a liquid that is almost drinkable.

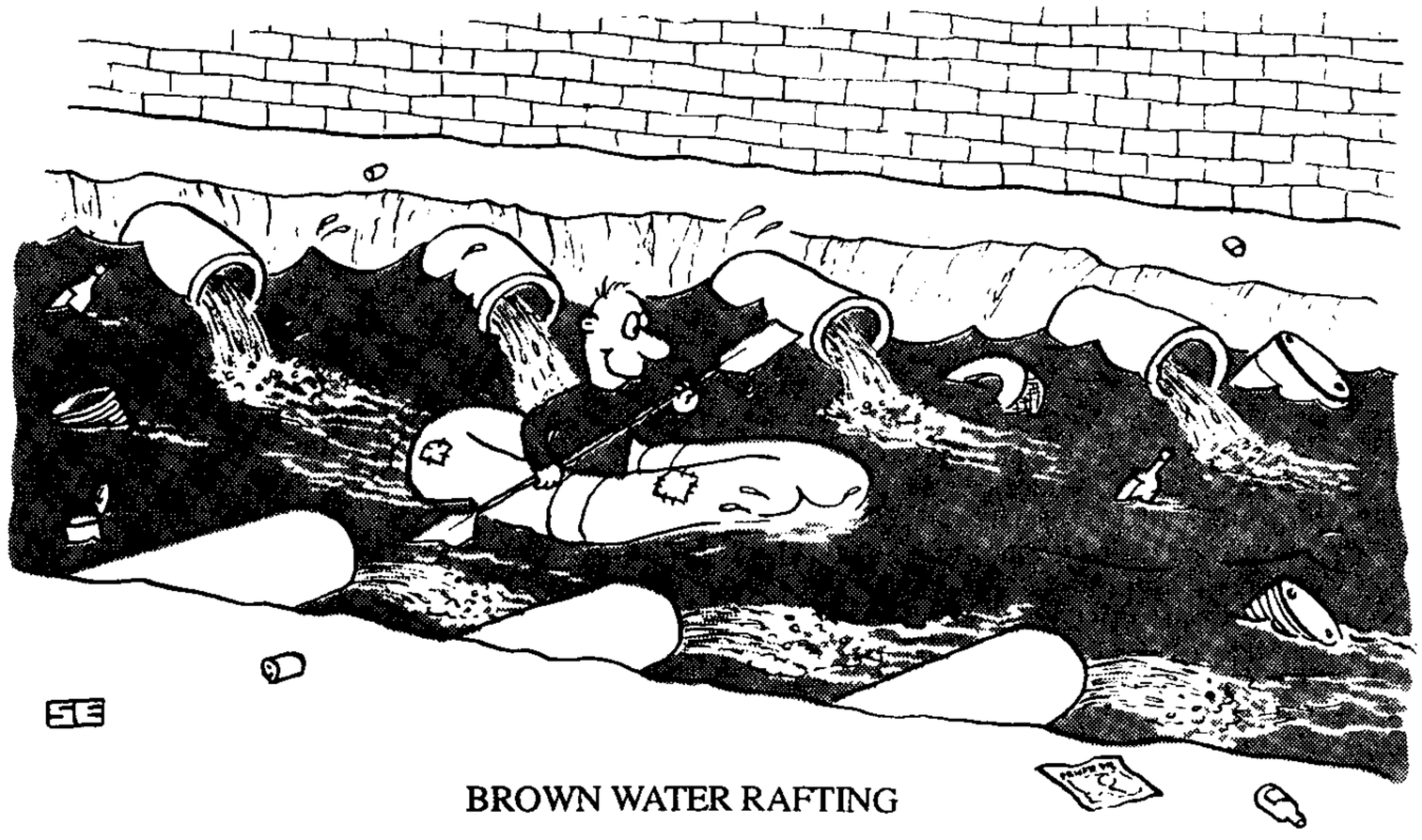
The best news of all for the water authorities is that the new treatment plants are not too expensive: indeed they are substantially cheaper than the "outfall" schemes whereby half-treated and still infectious sewage is pumped into the sea by means of expensive underwater pipes. The plants, says John Brown's literature, "obviate" the need for sewage outfall into the sea.

This news brought new hope to campaigners in West Cornwall who are trying to stop South West Water from piping half-treated muck into St Ives Bay (see *Eyes passim*). South West Water, a private company which can do what it likes, is proceeding relentlessly with this scheme though it is vigorously opposed by every representative body in the region.

The supporters of the campaign against the St Ives Bay "outfall" have argued that sewage treatment plants would not only be cleaner and safer, but also substantially cheaper. The John Brown trumpetings about the new plants seemed to prove their point. But a campaigner who urged the company to pass on the good news to South West Water and other authorities in Cornwall got a shock response. He was told that the advertising literature had been *banned* from Cornwall and that the company had issued strict and secret instructions that none of the news about the new treatment plants should be circulated west of Bristol.

And which is the company that has won a large part of the contract to build the disgusting outfall scheme in St Ives Bay? Step forward John Brown...

Like the other company which will build the scheme — Cementation — John Brown is part of the Trafalgar House Group, which benefited so hugely from the Thatcher privatisations. Any threat to their fat contracts in Cornwall would come at a bad time for the group. Its flagship QE2 has just hit a rock off the coast of Rhode Island, and millions of pounds in rich people's cruise money will be lost. The group's shares are bumping along the floor, and if things go on as they have been doing recently, the name of the chairman, Sir Nigel Broackes, may take on an entirely new significance.



BROWN WATER RAFTING

In the City

PROOF, if that were necessary, tha. Philip Green is What Everyone Does Not Want is the ever southward trek of the Amber Day share price, down three-quarters at 31p, and the fact that Green has now become the only major buyer of the discount retailer's shares as witnessed by the company's decision to snap up 6.1 million of its own shares from the Prudential.

While, as the ever faithful *Sunday Times* remarked on 9 August, cancelling 5 percent of the capital will cut the dividend bill and enhance earnings, it will also remove a potential mega-tap from the market which could have driven the price even lower. And if the Pru is happy to accept 27.5p a share for the bulk of its holding, that signals that Amber Day is still over-priced in the view of an institutional investor that has backed Green from early days.

Given the profits Amber Day is expecting to make this year — the forecast, though reduced, is still to beat last year's £10 million — the share price is saying that either this forecast will be badly missed or that Green has to go for there to be any recovery. Either way the Pru, which is selling at a loss for £1.68 million a stake which has fallen by £6.2 million in less than a year, is voting with its feet.

That Green is so disliked in and outside the City is no surprise to many of those who have met or done business with him. The picture says it all. But a study of Green's business career also helps to understand why he is increasingly What Everyone Does Not Want.

Mirror, mirror... who is the least popular of all?

In the early days of Amber Day, when the shares were spiralling from 40p to a peak of 129p last November, there was talk of little more than Green's coup in selling a package of near bankrupt jeans companies to Lee Cooper in 1986. That deal gave Green £3 million plus an earn-out based on the following three years' profits, which could have taken the price to between £5 and £10 million. But within a year Green was gone. Whether any further payments were made by Lee Cooper seems unlikely as in 1988 the ex-Green company Lunabond wrote off more than half the cost of its £4.5 million investment in the jeans companies.

But Philip Green was in business long before he became known for FU (jeans). Alas, however, not with the degree of success that the Amber Day hype machine suggested. In 1973 Green, then 21, was appointed a director of Langley Road Investments, a Green family company which owned two properties in Bromley and Thornton Heath. At that time he was described as a "property negotiator".

Three years later he and his mother Alma Green formed Tarbrook, which ran a textile import/export business. Little is known about the success of this venture as no accounts were filed after those for 1976-78. But what is known is that in November 1983 Tarbrook was insolvent and put into creditors' voluntary liquidation owing unsecured creditors £239,000. Assets were just £436.

This was the second business setback in 12 months for the nascent tycoon. In December 1982 Cupcraft, formed in 1980 as clothing importers and fashion retailers, had similarly been found to be insolvent and placed in voluntary liquidation. Green was chairman and owned 50 percent of Cupcraft. Just what the assets and liabilities were is uncertain due to the absence of a detailed statement of affairs on the file with the registrar of companies. One interesting coincidence is that in the case of both Tarbrook and Cupcraft, the liquidator was Panos Eliades — appointed administrative receiver by Green in January this year to Harabels, the retail fashion business run by his wife.

When Green came into Amber Day four years ago shareholders were told about the demise of Tarbrook and Cupcraft. Total deficiencies of £254,000 were listed. But this disclosure was not complete. It omitted, no doubt by accident, two other business failures with which Green had been involved.

During 1983 Green was appointed a director of Buzzville, a ladies clothes manufacturer. Alma Green owned half the shares. Buzzville was found to be insolvent and placed in voluntary liquidation in March 1984. The liabilities were £103,000 against assets of £500. Once again the faithful Eliades was appointed liquidator. Eliades is the next door neighbour of failed insurance salesman Roger Levitt, also not unknown to Green. Eliades stood bail for Levitt when the bowtied one was charged with fraud.

Also missing from the Amber Day disclosure was Joan Collins Jean Company, formed in 1981 with Green as a director. This company was compulsorily wound up in November 1982 on a petition from creditor Viceroy Press. The details of the failure are not recorded on the company file.

Lack of information is a common theme when it comes to examining the private companies with which Green has been associated. Wearstyle, a retail fashion business controlled by Alma Green and where Green was a director, has filed no accounts since those for 1984. In March last year Companies House finally came round to threatening to strike the company off. No action has yet been taken to do that, despite the continued absence of accounts.

Reviewing Philip Green's business career perhaps makes it more understandable why there seem to be so many in the retail and rag trade business who wish him far from well. A matter which, like the ever sliding share price, can be of no comfort to Amber Day's City advisers Samuel Montagu and Smith New Court who, badly savaged by their involvement with Cap'n Rob, do not need further embarrassment.

Meanwhile over at the *Sunset Times* City editor Jeff Randall would still seem to have a substantial soft spot for Green. A suggestion by colleague David Hellier that the views of one of Amber Day's recently departed directors might be worth reporting was not met with raging enthusiasm by Randall — naturally on purely journalistic grounds.

His view was more than justified when the ex-director concerned subsequently recognised the error of his ways and withdrew his comments after a full and frank discussion with Green, who made his views clear in his inimitable friendly fashion.

A completely false account of the Randall position on Green — with whom at all times he has dealt in a proper and responsible manner — has been conveyed by those reporting a supposed comment quite wrongly attributed to the *Sunset Times* scribe that "I have let the relationship get too close but I will deal with it in my own way".

Presumably as in the latest comment on the benefits of the Prudential deal.

IT WILL be interesting indeed to see how many clients of PR fat man Tony Canning follow him from Charles Barker to Georgeson International, bought out on the cheap from the wreckage of Corporate Communications (chief executive: T. Canning).

(It would be quite wrong to suggest that any form of fraudulent preference was gained by the group's main creditor Bank of Scotland or its largest shareholder, and therefore unsecured creditor, insurers USF & G who backed the buy-out.)

Will Canning's new investor relations operation be able to rely on top drawer City names like BAT, British Steel, Blue Circle, National Grid, Tesco and the *Economist* after the collapse of Corporate Communications owing £10 million? Not perhaps if they want to keep the goodwill of the *Financial Times* (£250,000) and the *Daily Telegraph*, both left holding bad debts.

But anyone wanting to learn about or defend corporate excess (high six-figure salaries, Concorde, New York apartments etc.) need look no further. And as for how to stiff your creditors, well, Fat Tony's your man.

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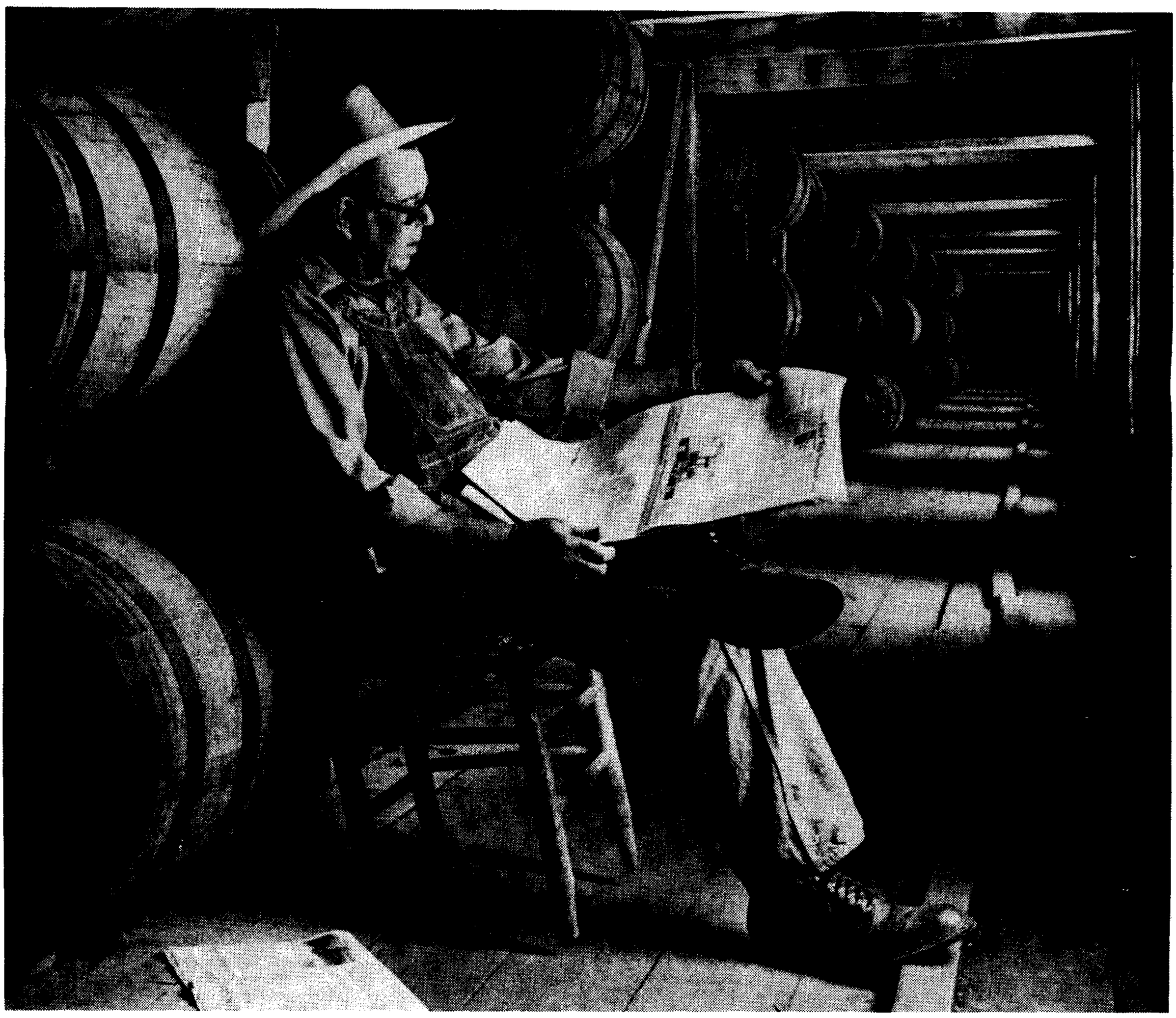

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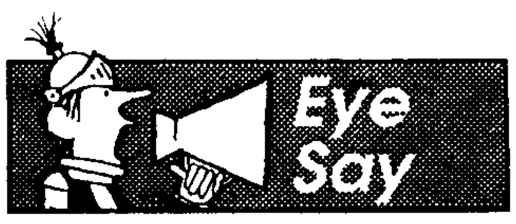
'I called his office the other afternoon. His secretary said he wasn't about. "Oh, doesn't he work in the afternoons?" I asked. "No, it's the mornings he doesn't work," she replied. "In the afternoons, he doesn't come in." '
BRIAN JOHNSTON referring to MARMADUKE HUSSEY, chairman of the BBC governors, in his Foyle's luncheon speech.



CLONE RANGERS may not join DENSA.

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4PETER: Ore Verse, Merlin.

GARY PEERS at-bugs?

POTATO-HEAD: You're a potato-head but I love you very much. J.

EL-DENTIFRISK: One Crown, LOLLY, T.A.

"JACKO", Foreign Legion, '82-'87, Tahiti: Contact Box 0100.

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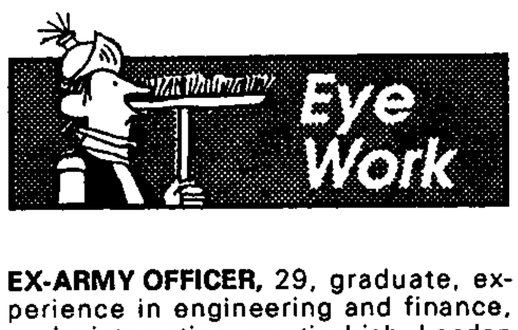

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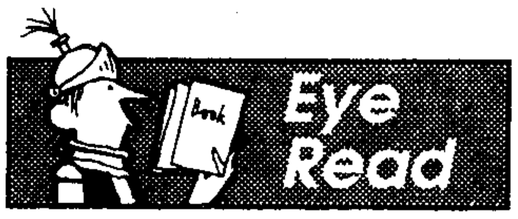

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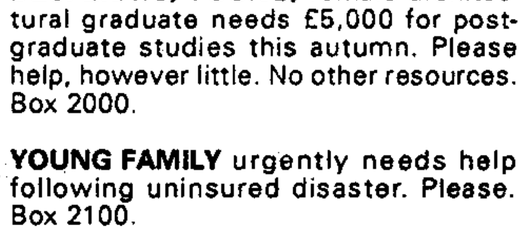

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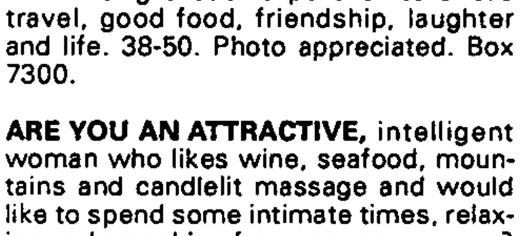

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MALE (37), 6'4", 220 lbs, poor, IQ 35, innocent, optimistic, therefore seeks English/American female younger/older for genuine fun, initially through correspondence. Box 8900.

ENGLISH PROFESSIONAL guy, U.A.E. based, late thirties, cosmopolitan type, seeks a single female wanting loveable guy with intentions of marriage and children. Box 9000.

DILIGENT BUT DECADENT City male (33) seeks hedonistic London lady to enjoy lazy eating, drinking, talking, travel and romance together. Box 9100.

ISOLATED BUT FUNNY pretty still hopeful woman 32 seeks kind stable solvent Peter Cook humourlike Tony Slattery lookalike initially for friendship. Photo please. Box 2800.

MALE, PROFESSIONAL, "young" 50s, married, missing physical pleasures, seeks non-smoking female to share mutually satisfying weekday "escapes". London/SE. Box 2900.

BEAUTIFUL BLONDE business partners each seeking wealthy, hunky man, offering fun times away. Interested? Send photo. (30s). Box 3000.

DIRECTOR, FIFTYISH, tall, fit, graduate, athlete, musician, nonsmoker, seeks the right lady, fortyish, elegant, well-groomed, for friendship, romance, etc. on whom to lavish attention. Box 3100.

EXCEPTIONAL LADY, warm, loving and very, very sexy, 40, well groomed, well educated and well connected, desires marriage with man of integrity (senior centre-left politician or captain of industry). Absolute discretion. Serious replies only, please. Box 3200.

HUMOROUS HANDSOME witty male urgently needed for female, 23, Bath area, no sad, discreet businessmen, OK? Box 4100.

ANGLIAN MAN, 42, still good looking in dim light; seeks secret affair. Box 4200.

ATTRACTIVE FUN-LOVING professional male fiftyish married but neglected seeks affectional sensual woman perhaps in similar situation, Yorkshire/NE. Box 4300.

PRETTY GIRL tall slender 19 seeks letter from kind chivalrous professional chap. Box 4400.

FUNLOVING, AFFECTIONATE male 27, seeks honest outgoing woman for good times. Box 4500.

FRUSTRATEDLY CELIBATE married guy, slim sensitive alive, seeks slim uninhibited woman, South London. Box 4600.

KAFKA'S RELATION. 74 year old man, mobile fit solvent seeks younger woman London for platonic friendship. Box 4700.

IS THERE A MAN needing green card for America who would help mother with teenage son to stay here? Box 4800.

TALL HANDSOME sporty freelance artist 25 seeks slim attractive female for love and romance. Photo please. Oxfordshire. Box 4900.

WEALTHY MALE, 48, seeks beautiful girl for trips to Rio, Paris and as crew on my boat for voyages cross Channel. Box 9200.

AT WORK I'M SMART, professional, 34 and female. Outside I'm alluring, adventurous, lively and witty. You are handsome with a brain and SOH. Box 9300.

NO BULLSHIT and modest too! Fit, good looking, very solvent, successful, early 30s eligible exciting man yet to meet right girl. You must be 20-30 years, very attractive, athletic and interesting. West/South England. (Photo appreciated.) Box 6700.

MAN, 29, with full-length mirror, seeks unattached woman for reflections of love and life. Box 3900.

SECRET LIAISON? Lively, young 50s, n/s male, wide interests, trapped affectionate celibate relationship, seeks lady for secret fun, outings with exciting schedule and such. Shropshire, West Mids. Box 6100.

ATTRACTIVE, LIVELY woman (30s) slim, fit, creative professional into travel, outdoor life, active sports, arts, lots besides! Seeking similar male company (34-44) mature sense of fun/adventure essential. Swap letters/photos? (South). Box 6600.

CAMBRIDGE GRADUATE, (33) successful, caring, cuddly, seeks bright, curvy lady 23-32 to love forever. Box 3300.

MATURE CHAP seeks lady for permanent relationship and raise family. Box 3400.

TALL EXPATRIATE man, living in Hong Kong, 36, eminently available, seeks attractive, tall, caucasian younger lady to be flown out to the Pearl of the Orient and beyond for fun, companionship and love. Girls, make your dreams come true! Genuine replies with photos will be promptly answered. Box 3500.

LADY, SLIM, FAIR, no ties, ex-pat, forties, offers everything to one special fellow (40+ non-smoker) who could provide a house for me, in return for ongoing special ties. Cheshire/anywhere within UK. Box 3600.

ATTRACTIVE OVERWEIGHT nurse, 30s, seeks tall attractive professional male for love and laughter. Box 3700.

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"I'M TOO SEXY for my shellsuit". Male, 27, 5'9, balding, specs, likes swimming, travel and cinema seeks warm sensual sporting lass for romance and fun, late 20s, London based. Box 4696.

AFFLUENT AND SINGLE businessman, 47, seeks younger attractive female to pamper. London area. Box 9599.

RUGGED ATTRACTIVE 6ft partner in City seeks 30-45 very attractive lady to share fun, life between London and beamy cottage 30 miles northwest. Write with photo for mine by return. Box 5199.

MARRIED VIRILE man, 55, seeks unashamedly randy woman, under 5'6" for torrid affair in Bristol/Avon/Somerset/Glos/Wilts. Own accommodation preferable. Stockings, suspenders unbelievable bonus!! Totally unshockable, frank exciting letter invited. Complete discretion assured/sought. Box 7999.

INTELLIGENT, WITTY, American Merlin summons 25-35 sensuous goddess to a higher crusade along the road less travelled. Look inside, you have love to weave, transformation to experience, and desire a oneness with dreams. Express yourself, teach me, let us weave together. Photo. Box 10199.

SUCCESSFUL MALE, 40, seeks kind, intelligent female friend. Box 3199.

WEALTHY AND ATTRACTIVE male, 26, would like to meet a young lady for fun and romance. Must be able to laugh in bed. Photo guarantees reply. Box 3299.

I APPEAL to any nice Englishman to reply to a 46 year old lady from Yugoslavia. I have a 17 year old son but have been without a male partner for some years. I don't want to spend the rest of my life alone and hope to correspond with an English businessman with a view to love and marriage. Please send a letter with your photograph to MIRJANA STOJICEVIC, Kraga Milutina 9/18, 11300 Smederevo, Srbija, Yugoslavia.

WEST MIDLANDS businessman, tennis widower, 40s, slim, affluent, seeks sensual affair with similar bored attractive lady. Perhaps gold widow. Box 2300.

HAPPILY-ATTACHED- but-bored? I am. Yup — another one. I'm a fit over-forty professional male who enjoys just about everything life offers. You're a happy lady in her thirties-or-so, hoping for occasional no pressure adventures. Why not? London-ish and Westward. Box 2400.

ATTRACTIVE INDEPENDENT professional lady, 50, seeks warm amusing affluent man 45-55, to enjoy life with. Box 2500.

BRIAN, FORGET these other ads; if I asked you out, what would you say? Bridge.

LIFE BEYOND Watford Gap? I should think so! Midlands based attractive, single woman, 38, professional, solvent, interesting and all that jazz, seeks similar(ish) sincere, unattached man, brain more important than brawn, for conversations, food, wine, fun, and let's see what happens. Box 2600.

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INTERNATIONAL SUCCESSFUL concert pianist, 38, single, 5'10", good build, right-wing, seeks smart slim sexy secretary (big glasses, mini skirt etc.) for seriously good fun. Sense of humour essential. Absolutely no schoolteachers, sales reps, gold-diggers, or mothers. Socialists and vegetarians generally discouraged. Must not have Aids. Please send letter and recent photo. Box 5000.

PROFESSIONAL SPORTSMAN, 36, single, sense of humour, seeks older lady for discreet affair, dinners, lunches etc. Photo please. Box 5100.

ATTRACTIVE FEMININE independent divorcee (43) hopes to meet intelligent man with whom she can share life. Usual cultural interests in London, relaxes in Sussex. Box 5200.

BEN ELTON CLONE seeks tasty wacky chick to share the finer points of "Thelma and Louise" and "Carry On Cleo". Box 5300.

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EXPAT AGED 30 seeks affectionate N/West lady to pamper him on UK holidays. Box 5700.

EDINBURGH BORDERS. I'm a sociable cuddly 45 divorcee with my own business, children at college. I'm a bundle of fun. Are you? Box 5800.

PRETTY MID-THIRTIES lady has Beetle convertible, seeks passengers — a man (circa 40) and a couple of kids. She enjoys cuddles, kisses, conversation and the odd round of golf! Box 5900.

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LAWYER, YOUNG 60, seeks younger similar woman for lunching and loving. Box 6200.

SERIOUS, SENSUAL, wild and wonderful paradox sought by n/s professional single male, 34. Box 6300.

"ARE PEOPLE WHO make love bonkers?" Male 39 slim, tall, attractive but hopelessly romantic, seeks female research assistant to complete thesis. Box 6400.

HANDSOME TALL City solicitor, 35, enjoys having fun escaping rat race and City; likes Italy, sailing, exploring new places and beautiful women; seeks one of latter to participate in former. Box 6500.

MALE 27, GRADUATE, model looks; stylish, successful, caring, intelligent, hedonist. Fantastic lifestyle. Why advertise? You're rare, 20s, happy, gorgeous. Photo please. London. Box 6800.

SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSMAN, 38, tall, dark, single, degree, unpossessive, seeks attractive intelligent female 20-35. North-West. Photo helpful — returned. Box 6900.

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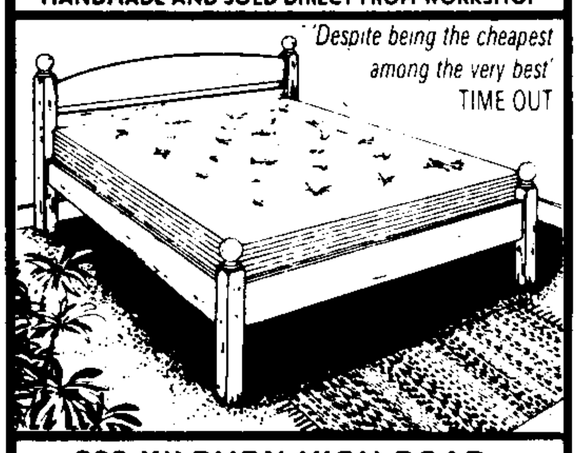

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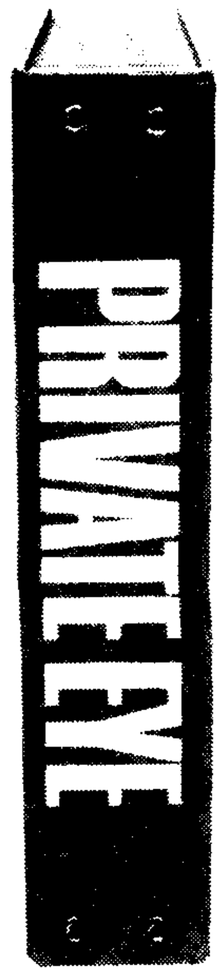

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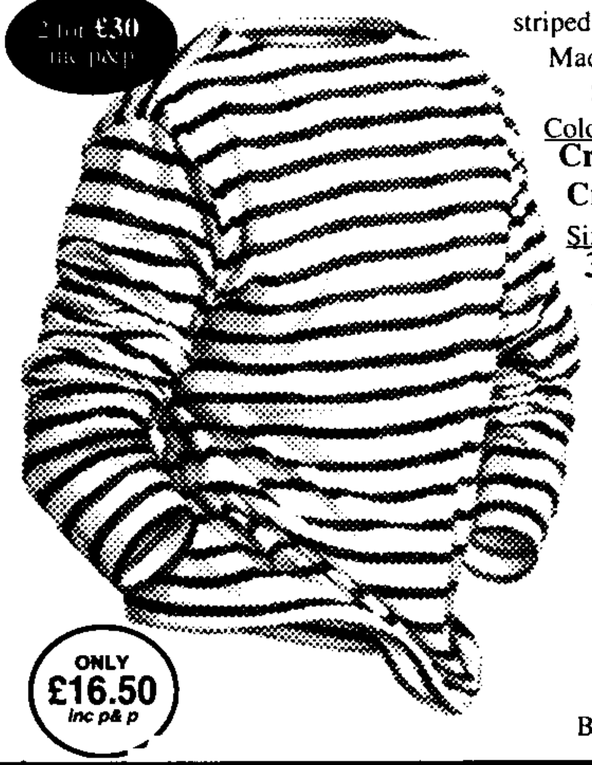

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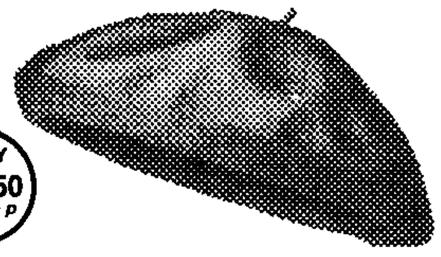

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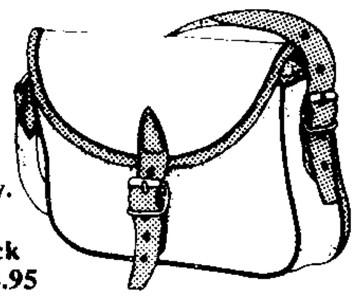

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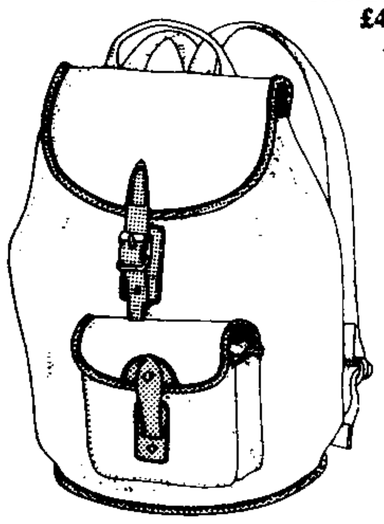

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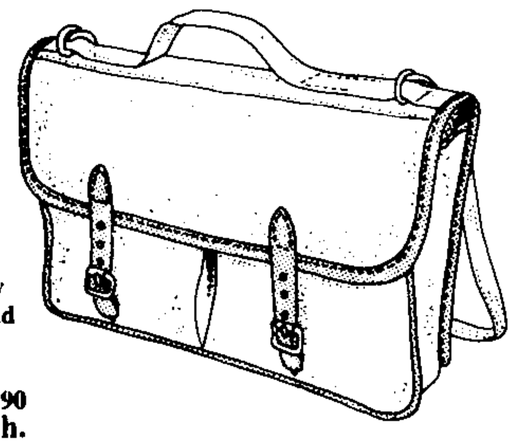

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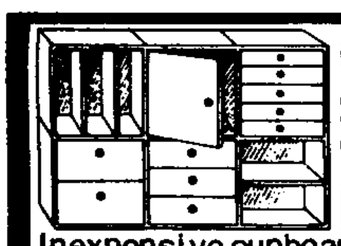

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